

(A/N) Okay in case you recognize the title yes this is not originally my story. This story and it's general ideas belong to Leonineus. I asked his permission to continue his story when he posted that he was no longer going to do it himself. He allowed me to continue his work. Now as for my notes, these are important. I decided to rewrite his story to my writing style. His major ideas are still going to be incorporated don't you worry about that. I just didn't want the readers to be overwhelmed by the drastic writing style change between chapters. Now for the legal disclaimers. -ahem- One, I do not own Harry Potter in any way shape or form, J. does. She is a talented artist and all credit goes to her. Two, this is a not for profit story, it is not to be distributed for any gain whatsoever, monetary or otherwise. Three, I am not forcing you to read this, if you do not like it don't read it. Now that that is out of the way I can say what's on my mind. As with Leonineus' I do not discriminate against anyone's sex, sexual preference, religion, heritage, or creed. Whatever you do is your own business and I don't care. In fact I empower people to be different. I hope you find my rewrite to your liking Leonineus and readers. Enjoy.

Harry was a bright and timid boy. He never acted out and never hurt anyone. He did his studies and got good grades in school. He was your average boy when compared to the next boy. Nothing about him stood out of the ordinary. He had wild black hair, startlingly green eyes, and a small stature and physique. He wore hand-me-down clothes from his cousin, which were always a little too large for him. He wore a pair of glasses that were broken and taped on the bridge. The only unusual part of him was a unique scar on his forehead. His bangs usually covered up this scar but occasionally one would catch a glimpse of it. The scar, always dominant on Harry's forehead, edged downward like a lightning bolt. It started at his hairline and ended right above his right eyebrow. Aside from this, Harry was as normal as can be.

Harry lived with his aunt, uncle, and their son. The three of them were also as normal as can be, when in public. Harry's aunt, Petunia Dursley, was a very tall woman. To Harry she most resembled a horse. Her neck had elongated over the years of craning her head over her fence to spy on the neighbors. She had neck length curly brown hair that she took thirty minutes to brush every morning. She was always humming a song to herself when she was working in the garden. Always saying hello to the neighbors when they walked by,

but muttering insults under her breath when she walked away. She was your typical suburban homemaker.

Harry's uncle, Vernon Dursley, was a short and plump man. Harry thought he looked like a giant blueberry. Vernon worked at a local construction tools dealer. He went to work at eight in the morning and was home before the five o'clock news. He was constantly reading the paper or watching the news. He was always complaining about some new law or some protest group. He had short brown hair and a thick brown mustache. He was also always getting angry whenever his favorite soccer team lost. Whenever he got mad, his face turned purple making him look more like a blueberry than usual. Harry would always quietly laugh to himself whenever his uncle got angry.

The last member of Harry's family was his cousin, Dudley Dursley. Dudley was on a fast track to looking exactly like his father. Harry assumed he did not have much left to go in the weight department. Dudley was either in his room playing video games or out hanging with his friends tormenting children younger than him. Harry never liked Dudley's gang so he would normally avoid them. Dudley was the favorite out of the two of them. Dudley always got the best presents, the most during meals, and the best room in the house. Harry got the short end of every stick he drew. Dudley's life was a breeze. He had no hardships, having everything handed to him on a silver platter.

Harry was the black sheep of this family. Harry's surname was Potter and he came to live with his aunt, uncle, and cousin when his parents died when he was a baby. According to Petunia and Vernon, Harry's parents, Lilly and James Potter died in a car crash. The car crash was how Harry received his scar. Harry had no reason to doubt this story so he accepted it. Now some might see the Dursleys with their son Dudley and think them loving parents. There is no doubt they are loving parents, oh no, but they are the worst relatives Harry has ever laid eyes on.

Harry's relatives forced him to live in a small cupboard under the stairs in the Dursley house. Harry could never leave his so-called room. He was forced to do all the chores and cooking in the house. In all sense and purpose, Harry Potter was the Dursleys' slave. His aunt and uncle never let him eat more than a slice of toast or a wedge of cheese. He did not even have enough room to sleep. At

night, Harry would always sneak out to grab more food. Harry could only ever leave the house in order to do the shopping for the Dursleys. Petunia told the shopkeeper of the store to never to let him out of his sight. If the shopkeeper caught Harry trying to steal anything, he had permission to beat Harry to within an inch of his life. The shopkeeper was an old friend of Vernon so it was no use pleading with him.

Dudley and his friends had a great game that they used to play. Dudley would get anything he wanted so if he asked his parents if Harry could play with them outside then Harry had to obey. Once outside, Dudley gave Harry a five-second head start before they proceeded to chase him. Harry was scrawny and small but he was damn near impossible to catch. On the off chance that they caught him, it was only because he was cornered. Once cornered, the gang proceeded to beat the living daylights out of young Harry Potter. Harry could do nothing but taking the beating because if he resisted then he would receive a worse beating from Dudley's parents. Harry's life was miserable and was not getting better anytime soon.

Harry would always wish of a life better than the one he had currently. Whenever he was in school, he would stay late to read books in the library. Whenever asked what he was doing he would say that he was too stupid in school and needed to stay after to get help in his subjects. Harry was lucky that his aunt and uncle were no smarter than the common housefly. Harry was smarter than many of the children in his class or in higher classes. He was always getting the highest grade without the need to study. Harry would read fantasy books about knights and dragons whenever he was in the library. He did this until his tenth birthday. After he turned ten, his interest in books changed from knights and dragons to witches and wizards. He would often dream of leaving his house and learning magic. He wanted this so much that he often had vivid dreams when he was asleep of soaring through the skies on a broom.

Harry was miserable yes, but he was surviving, until one day when everything made a drastic turn for the worse. Harry had snuck out of his cupboard one night in the middle of winter. He was freezing and wanted to see if the fireplace didn't go out yet. When he entered the living room, he found the logs still dieing down from last night's fire. Harry extended his hands towards the fire and tried to rub some warmth into them. The fire was dieing quicker than Harry had hoped and he was actually getting colder. Harry wished that the fire were

going full blast. He was almost at his breaking point. He couldn't take it anymore. He shut his eyes and started to let all the anger he had towards his aunt, uncle, and cousin out at once. Suddenly the fireplace sprang to life and there was a roaring flame.

Harry couldn't believe his eyes. Harry would every rarely do something that he couldn't explain but this was the first time that it actually helped him out. Harry was delighted that the fire was going once more. He sat closer to it and let the fire bathe him in its warm embrace. Harry shut his eyes and sat there for a few minutes. He didn't want to move from this spot. He opened them when he felt something burn his cheek. He saw that a small ember broke off a log and landed on his cheek. That was when Harry started to worry. He saw embers flying all over the living room. The fire was growing out of control. Soon some embers lit random pieces of furniture on fire.

Harry cried out fire while going for a small washtub in the kitchen. He filled it with water and, just as Vernon came crashing down the stairs he threw the water onto the fire in the living room. Vernon looked from the scorched furniture to Harry, and immediately thought the worst.

"You did this didn't you boy?" Harry panicked and froze. "Answer me boy!"

Harry didn't know what to do. He knew what was coming but he just couldn't move. Time seemed to slow down for Harry. He could see his uncle's face get blue with anger. Petunia came down the stairs with Dudley in her arms. Harry could see that things were turning against his favor quickly. His legs were like lead and he just couldn't move.

"Run!" Harry didn't know where this voice came from but he obeyed it without hesitation. He quickly ducked when Vernon made a grab for his collar. He jumped behind the scorched couch when Vernon started to throw things at him. He took a chance and peeked above the couch. He saw the three of them advancing on his left. He dodged right and jumped over the coffee table. Once he saw a path of escape, he took it. He headed for the door and his heart sank when he remembered that they locked the door at night. He would have to waste precious seconds that he didn't have to unlock and open the door. He braced himself for the inevitable beating that

would follow his capture, but something strange happened. The front door exploded into a shower of wood shrapnel. Harry couldn't believe his luck, another unexplainable thing occurred but he didn't stop to investigate. He jumped through the now open doorway and out into the snow covered streets.

"If I ever see you back here boy I will personally oversee your execution!" Harry didn't stop to turn and see who had said this but he didn't care. He was finally free and he was never going to go back to his old life.

It was when Harry reached the end of Private Drive that he realized the severity of his situation. He had just run away from his only home. He had no friends to stay with and no money to his name. He was only wearing a thin long sleeved shirt and a pair of pants; he wasn't even wearing a pair of socks or shoes. He ran until he couldn't run anymore then he walked until he couldn't walk anymore. He found a small tattered blanket in a nearby waste bin and nicked it. He hid inside of a small playground house for the rest of the night. He didn't get much sleep.

The next morning he had two options. Hope that his aunt and uncle wouldn't kill him if he returned home or continue walking in a random direction and hope for the better. He instantly chose the latter and continued down the road. He walked for what seemed like hours in the freezing snow. Twice he slipped and fell causing his clothes to tear. His feet blistered and froze from constant abuse. He was nearing the end of his ropes when he found a small overpass. He decided to hide under that for the night. The small blanket was almost useless in the cold weather he was in now. Once under the overpass he huddled against himself as much as he could to block out the cold. He hoped beyond hope that something would change and he would get out of this mess.

"Fire, you need to make a fire."

There was that voice again. Harry assumed it was his subconscious mind guiding him. He looked around for anything to burn but all he found was a pile of damp newspapers. With nothing to dry them or even light them on fire with that was out of the question. He turned around to look for anything else, when he felt something warm on his back. He did a quick one eighty and saw that the pile of newspapers was on fire. He quickly moved over to them and felt the

rich warmth spread over his body. He placed his feet near the fire to thaw them out for fear of hypothermia. That night Harry actually got an hour or two of sleep. When the sun reared its head over the horizon Harry decided it was time to move out once more.

He looked longingly one last time at the burning newspapers wishing that he could take the fire with him. He shut his eyes and turned to leave. Once down the road the fire on the newspapers mysteriously vanished leaving behind a damp and unburned pile of newspapers. Harry never saw this as he shielded his face against the blowing wind. Harry spent the following week walking from alley to alley, overpass to overpass, empty building to empty building. He was beginning to lose all hope of getting out of this latest mess. He was walking down the middle of the road when he tripped and fell face first into a pile of snow. Harry picked himself up off the road, and dusted the snow off his clothes when he heard a screeching sound behind him. He turned to see a car's headlights an inch in front of his face.

"Oh my god I'm so sorry I didn't see you there are you okay?" A young woman probably in her mid to late twenties stepped out of her car. "Are you okay? Are you hurt anywhere?"

Harry looked up at her and started to back away slowly from the car. The woman held out a hand to help Harry onto his feet. Harry jumped back and held his hands in front of his face. "Relax I'm not going to hurt you." Harry slowly looked back at the woman. He saw a kind smile on her face as she once again extended a helping hand. Harry hesitantly took her hand. The woman helped Harry onto his feet and gave him a once over. Satisfied that Harry wasn't hurt too badly, she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Why are you outside with so little clothes on? Aren't your parents worried where you are? Where do you live, I'll take you back there."

"NO!" Harry started to panic. He didn't want to go back to those people ever again. He saw the shocked and confused look in the woman's eyes. "I m-mean, no I d-don't have any p-p-parents."

"I'm so sorry, do you have any friends that I can bring you to or a shelter that you live in?"

"London"

The voice popped into Harry's mind once more. He had yet to find a reason not to trust this voice. "L-London, I have f-friends in London."

"London? That's only twenty minutes from here. Get in my car and I'll drive you there." The woman stepped over to the passenger side door and opened it. Harry walked slowly over and climbed into the seat. Once settled in the woman closed the door and walked to the driver side door. Once both occupants were in and buckled up, she started down the road.

Harry was glad to be in a warm place for once. The woman had turned on the car's heater to full blast. Harry sat in silence for most of the car ride until they came to London. When asked where in London, Harry tried hard to think where he needed to go.

"Charring Cross Road, you'll have friends there."

"Charring Cross Road?" Harry didn't know part of London. He didn't understand why the voice was telling him to go to London. The woman on the other hand seemed to know exactly where she was going. A couple of blocks later Harry was stepping out of the car. After Harry's reassurance that his friends were nearby, the woman drove off.

Harry turned around and saw the buildings that flanked the road. He had no clue where he was or where he needed to go. Harry stood there in the cold for a few minutes before he noticed a small building. The sign above the door read 'The Leaky Cauldron' but no one seemed to be paying attention to it. If Harry hadn't been absentmindedly staring at that building he probably wouldn't noticed it either. He walked across the street and towards the building. People stared at him all the way; until he was right next to the building then it seemed as if he wasn't there. People passed mere inches in front of him but didn't even turn to apologize if they bumped into him. Harry turned towards the door and tried the handle, when it turned he pushed open the door. He wanted to walk inside but the cold and his exhaustion finally took hold and he fell to the floor. The barman quickly ran over to Harry and turned him over.

"I can't believe my eyes. It can't be. Harry Potter?"

Harry was barely conscious when he reached up and the barman took his hand. "Help me, please." Harry's hand fell through the barman's and onto the floor.

(A/N): Okay Harry just had a very difficult first day. I know most of the story is description, but where would we be if we didn't know things? If you liked it leave a good review. If you didn't like it, let me know and maybe I'll incorporate your ideas into the story. I am not above humility. I will try and update this story every week on Wednesday but there might be times when I simply can't do an update that week. I have work and a life. I only write in my free time. I have twenty stories that I randomly work on. (This one will take priority over most). Now before I bore you all to death with my side of the story I'll let you get on with yours. Have a good one and I'll see you next week.

(A/N): Okay I have good news and bad news. I would explain the events that spawned these thoughts but that would be telling. No it wasn't illicit or illegal, I was sick and my fever gave me funky dreams and thoughts. I'll get the bad news done and over with so that the good will outweigh the bad. Bad news is, I did some calculating and found out that it won't be until chapter 10 that Harry finally reaches Hogwarts. If you take that into account with my previously stated release date of Wednesdays, it would take until mid May till you guys would even catch a glimpse of those hallowed halls. Which brings me to the good news. I will try and release chapters much quicker than that. Now with that said, Yes my due date will still be Wednesday, but that is a bare minimum. I will attempt to write faster but there are still constraints. I have work that I must attend to and a social life with friends that I don't deem worthy of giving up. Now for some notes that I completely forgot to mention in the first chapter. One, This is currently rated T for violence and language with a dash of adult themes. No no sex, that would make it rated M. This rating may be temporary if I decide to change it to a more adult story, but I don't know as I am not that far into it. Secondly, I have rearranged some things in the story. Namely events and Harry's view of them. Other than that ... not much left to explain. Third chapters notes might include more if I think of them. Long winded notes aside, enjoy the second chapter.

Harry felt as if he was flying through the sky. He looked down and saw he was miles above the ground riding on a broomstick. He looked around and saw four people flying behind him. Their figures were extremely blurred but he felt as if he knew these people. He looked up and saw a small bird flying above him. The bird was singing the most beautiful song that Harry had ever heard. He looked back at the four people flying behind them. The only thing he could make out was the length and color of their hair. Harry assumed they were all girls based on the length of their hair. One with hair was as rich as mahogany. One with hair shined like an ocean pearl. The third's hair was a deep scarlet. The last had hair as black as a raven's coat. Harry didn't know why but he felt calm and happy flying with these girls and this bird. He never wanted it to end. Suddenly his vision grew dark and when he tried to clear it, he found he had been dreaming.

Harry groggily awoke in a dimly lit room. He turned his head to his side and felt a throbbing pain. He tried to look around but everything was extremely blurry. He saw a small glimmer nearby and assumed

that it was his glasses. Harry tried to get up but couldn't move anything without feeling some sort of pain. Harry was trying to find out where exactly he was when he remembered passing out in front of a bar. Harry then heard a nearby door open. He looked around but only saw a blurry figure coming in his room.

"Welcome to the land of the living."

"Where am I?"

"The Leaky Cauldron dear. How are you feeling?"

"Not good really, everything hurts and everything's blurry."

"Right, your glasses are right here on the table. I'll slip them on for you."

The figure grabbed Harry's glasses off the end table and slid them over Harry's eyes. The world focused and Harry could make out that he was in a small room. Candles were dotted around the room giving it light. Then Harry saw the person that he was talking to, it was a woman in her early fifties. She had short black hair and a very kind smile. Harry grew up very paranoid of people because of the Dursleys. He only gave his trust to those that would show sincere and pure kindness to him. Harry smiled back at the woman. The woman then grabbed something else from the end table.

"Here, drink from this. It will make you feel better."

"What's in it?" Harry's paranoia was getting the better of him.

"Relax it's not poison. Here I'll show you." The woman drank a little bit from the bottle and scrunched up her face a little bit. "Though it's not very good, it does remove some pain."

Harry accepted the drink from the elderly woman. Once he drank from the bottle, he could taste a small bit of peppermint then an overwhelming taste of vomit. Harry gagged a little but downed the rest of the drink. When finished Harry could feel a slight chill run down his spine and the pain was gone. Harry flexed his arms and legs to see if anything hurt but nothing did. Harry slowly got out of bed to get a better feel of his surroundings. As soon as he removed the covers, he felt as if the room dropped a few degrees. He looked

down at himself to find that the clothes he had been wearing were ruined beyond repair from both the weather and physical wear. They were full of so many holes it was as if Harry was wearing a net rather than clothes.

"How long was I out?"

"Oh not long, maybe a few hours" The woman replied with a smile. "I'm Annette by the way, the barman's wife. His name is Tom Deadman. Let me get you some better clothes to wear."

Harry saw Annette pull out a small wooden stick from her pocket and wave it towards the dresser. Harry had no idea why she was doing this or what it would accomplish. The answer soon showed itself when a set of clothes flew from a dresser drawer onto the bed in front of Harry. Harry's eyes widened in shock, he couldn't believe what had just happened.

"What just happened? What did you do?" Harry felt as if he already knew the answer but his mind wouldn't let him accept it.

"Magic of course, what else would it be?"

"Magic isn't real though. My uncle always said ... that ..." Harry's voice trailed off as he remembered all of the things that uncle Vernon had always told him. Magic isn't real. Things don't just happen randomly.

"Of course magic is real Harry. How else would I have been able to do that just now?"

"How do you know my name?"

"You're famous Harry. You defeated He Who Must Not Be Named."

"What do you mean? I couldn't have done that. I've never hurt anyone before in my entire life."

"Come now, you must have been told about what happened right?" Annette started to look a little worried. She wondered why Harry did not know about his life. At the very least, he should know about magic. "Harry, did anyone ever tell you about magic or your past?"

Harry shook his head. "Get dressed then Tom and I will tell you about everything."

Harry did as he was told, then followed Annette down to the bar. The bar was relatively empty since it was near midnight. Annette showed Harry to a nearby barstool where the barman, Tom, was cleaning mugs. Harry did a double take and realized that the mugs were actually cleaning themselves and Tom was just reading the newspaper. Even the newspaper surprised Harry. Headlines about dragons, vampires, and a wizard prison named Azkaban. The pictures on the newspaper seemed to be moving as well.

Harry had so many questions that he wanted to ask. Tom and Annette were more than willing to answer them. They told him all about the wizarding world. About a fantastic wizarding sport called Quidditch, and all of the teams that played for it. He was told about the different schools out there where young witches and wizards went to learn the art, the nearest one being Hogwarts. He learned about the headmaster and the professors at Hogwarts, including the four founders; Godric Gryffindor, Rowena Ravenclaw, Helga Hufflepuff, and Salazar Slytherin. He learned about their government and all of the rules and regulations that were helped them hide from muggles, non-magic folk. Even with all this new information, Harry still had one pressing question on his mind.

"So, why exactly am I famous again?" Harry saw Annette's and Tom's cheery faces fall.

"Well dear, it's about something that happened when you were just a baby."

"It's awfully hard to say this son, but I'll try. When you were just a tiny lad, a dark and powerful wizard named ... well He Who Must Not Be Named was terrorizing the wizarding world. He killed many people without remorse and left dozens of children without parents and homes. This, sadly, is what he did to you."

"You mean he killed my parents?"

"Yes. That night, when you were just a boy, Lilly and James Potter tried to protect you from him."

"They tried to protect me from him?"

"They died protecting their child. Then he turned to you, but miraculously you survived his attack."

Harry couldn't believe what he was hearing. His aunt and uncle had lying to him for his entire life. "My aunt and uncle said my parents died in a car crash." Harry, forgetting where he was, started to raise his voice. Lucky for him, only one nearby patron overheard their conversation. The man turned his head and immediately recognized Harry.

"Harry Potter, is that you?" The man whispered from across the bar.

Harry turned his head to see a giant of a man sitting at the other end of the bar. The man was easily twelve feet tall, or more. He had long bushy black hair and a long bushy black beard. He was wearing a giant moleskin overcoat that looked as if it pockets made up its entirety. Harry would have avoided the man if he hadn't seen the caring beetle black eyes and gentle smile behind the man's hair.

"It is you, isn't it?" The man got up from his seat and moved closer to Harry.

"Yes, I'm Harry Potter. May I ask who you are?"

"Oh blimey, I've forgotten my manners I have." The giant man stretched out a hand towards Harry. "My name is Rubeus Hagrid, keeper of the keys and grounds at Hogwarts." Harry shook Hagrid's hand and offered the seat next to him. Hagrid sat down next to Harry and placed his hand on Harry's shoulder. "Now what's this I hear about your parents dieing in a car crash?"

"Well my uncle always told me that my parents died in a car crash. That's also how I got this scar. Well at least that's what I used to believe. Apparently it was all a lie."

"Harry, your parents wouldn't want to see you this way."

"How would you know?" All this information was bogging Harry down, causing him to lose his temper in confusion.

"I know because I was the one who pulled you out of what was left of your house when you were a baby. Lily and James Potter dieing in a car crash, codswallop if you ask me."

"You knew my parents?"

"Knew 'em, I was one of their best friends. Hearing about' their... about' their death tore me heart in two." They all sat in silence for a while, no one knowing what to say next. Harry looked the saddest in the midst of them all.

"What were they like?" Harry finally said, breaking the silence.

"Perhaps it would be best if yeh went to claim yer inheritance from Gringotts. You might learn a thing or two from what's in there."

Harry looked at Tom and Annette to see if they agreed. They both slowly nodded their heads.

"Tell you what Harry m'boy I'll take you to Gringotts tomorrow morning if you're feeling up to it."

"That would be great. Thank you, everyone, for everything."

"It's nothin'. Now I must get goin' before it gets too late. I'll see you next year or perhaps sooner if business takes me back here, but as for me I'm needed in Norway for a little issue that Professor Dumbledore has me taking care of. How 'bout I stop by next month when I'm done eh?" Hagrid patted Harry on the shoulder causing him to fall forward onto the counter. "Sorry 'bout that. Sometimes I forget me own strength." Hagrid then left through the back door of the bar. Harry was about to ask where the back door led to when a yawn escaped him. He looked at a nearby clock to see that it was nearing four in the morning. Tom did the same and then looked at what he still needed to do.

"Blimey is that the time. I don't know if I'll have enough time left to finish what I need to do before breakfast in the morning."

"Don't worry dear I'll help you with this mess of yours." Annette gave a small chuckle and walked over to the other end of the bar to clean it.

"Is there anything that I can help with?" Harry looked between the two of them.

"We'll manage dear, just go get some rest. Tomorrow's going to be a big day for you. Once everything is sorted out we'll get you some clothes, unless you want to keep running around stark naked."

Harry blushed but smiled his thanks just the same. "I think I'll go to bed then. Thank you again and I'll see you two in the morning."

Harry bounded up the stairs and entered his room. He was almost beside himself with joy. He finally had something to give him pure happiness. He jumped into his bed and pulled up the covers. In no time at all Harry was asleep and dreaming once more of flying through the clouds. He tried desperately to see the four girls' faces, but no matter how much he could, everything was still just a blur. After a few moments of flying, Harry started to hear a beautiful noise above him. He looked up and saw a blue and white bird flying high overhead. It was emitting the most beautiful and soothing song that he had ever heard. For a while Harry felt extremely calm and at peace. He wished that this would never end.

Harry woke up around noon that day. He got out of bed and put on some clothes that he found in his dresser. After doing so, he cleaned his cracked glasses and ran downstairs. He found Tom in front of the bar taking orders for drinks. Before he could say anything, Annette pulled him to the side.

"What's wrong?" Harry looked extremely confused.

"I know that you don't know this but you are famous in the wizarding world. And since I figure you don't want to get hounded by everyone I have an offer to make you."

"What is it?"

"I can cast a spell on you so that you will look different to anyone who sees you. Though I'll only do this if you want me to."

Harry thought it over for a moment. He wasn't too big on the idea of masking his identity. On the other hand, he really did not anyone to bother him just yet. In the end, Harry nodded his head. Annette pulled out her wand and tapped it a few times over Harry's head.

Harry felt as if someone was gently tugging on his skin. When the feeling faded, Annette held up a mirror for Harry to see his new self. Harry almost thought that he was looking at a different person.

Harry's normal messy black hair was now sand colored, and was shoulder length. His normal jade eyes turned pearlescent. Harry was also sporting a nice tan that covered up the scar on his forehead, and if Harry wasn't mistaken, he felt a little bit taller as well.

"How is that Harold?"

"Harold?"

"Well you can't go around telling everyone that you're Harry Potter, can you?" Harry slowly shook his head. "So for the time being you can be Harold Deadman, Tom's nephew."

"Thanks Annette." Harry was about to head over to the bar when he heard a loud noise come from outside the small room.

"Annette I could use your help out here." Tom called from the bar.

Harry and Annette rushed out and saw a particularly unruly man throwing spells everywhere. People were ducking for cover behind overturned tables. Tom was behind the counter trying to disarm the man but couldn't get in a good shot. At the sight of two new targets, the man started to cast a few spells at Annette and Harry. Annette quickly pulled out her wand and started to deflect the spells shot towards them. Harry didn't really have a good idea of what was happening so he stepped out from behind Annette to get a better view. The man saw this and shot a spell at Harry. Harry instinctively put up his hands to defend himself. Annette was too busy deflecting the last spell shot at her to notice this, but when she did it was too late.

Harry didn't know how he did what he did. One moment he was holding his hands up in defense, and the next the ruckus ended. Harry had somehow conjured up a shield in from of himself causing the spell to deflect away from himself. In the confusion of what had happened, a stray spell cast from the strange man hit Annette. Harry looked over to see Annette's limp body. Harry saw red as he turned towards the man. Fury was the only emotion that Harry could feel right now. He thrust his hands forward causing the man to fly

backwards, crashing through the back door, and embedding himself in the brick wall a few feet behind it.

Annette recovered from the spell that hit her and was slowly getting up off the floor with her husband's help. Harry stood there staring at his hands in disbelief. Tom walked over to Harry and patted him on the shoulder.

"Well done m'boy, well done."

"What happened?"

"Well, long story short, accidental magic can be quite powerful sometimes when fueled by the right emotions. Now if I recall we were supposed to make a trip into Diagon Alley for your inheritance."

"Is it really okay to leave Annette and the man?"

"I will be just fine. As for the man, I'm sure he will think twice before starting something in here again. Now run along you two I'll take care of the bar for the day." Harry didn't look convinced. "Relax, if anything comes up I'll send word to you both immediately."

Harry nodded his head and turned towards the back door with Tom. Once through what remained of the back door Harry saw the man that had attacked everyone. He was unconscious about a foot deep in solid brick. Harry was surprised that the man wasn't dead. A noise from his left stirred Harry from his thoughts. When he turned to look for the source, he found the brick wall was moving to form the shape of an arc into the alley behind it. Once finished Harry could do nothing but stare through it.

"Welcome, Harry, to Diagon Alley."

Never did Harry have so many questions than he did now. Tom promised Harry to answer his questions as soon as they finished their trip to Gringotts. Harry felt as if his head was on a swivel. He kept turning his head every few feet to look at a new store or at different people. Stores were selling a wide variety of weird products to people wearing robes of so many different colors. Though all of this was amazing, the thing that amazed Harry the most was Gringotts. It was taller than any other building around it by at least

two stories, and made completely of marble. Tom led Harry through the large front doors and into the main hall.

Harry caught a strange looking plaque above the door.

Enter, stranger, but take heed of what awaits the sin of greed.

For those who take, but do not earn, must pay most dearly in their turn.

So if you seek beneath our floors a treasure that was never yours.

Thief, you have been warned. Beware of finding more than treasure there.

Then Harry caught sight of something even more unusual than the plaque. He saw small creatures walking about with long ears and sinister looking faces. Tom saw Harry eyeing the creatures and offered an explanation.

"Goblins Harry, they're great with money and even better with traps. It's best to stay on their good side. Also, never show a toothy smile to them."

"Is it bad to?"

"It's as bad as an insult to them."

Harry would have to keep this in mind. While they waited for the next goblin to free themselves up of customers, Harry decided to look around. To everyone else, goblins seemed as natural as the shirt on your back. Harry was looking at a railway when Tom called him over to a nearby stand.

"How can I help you today?" The goblin's voice was almost a low growl.

"We're here to ascertain the inheritance of this young man here." Tom placed a hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Name please?"

"Perhaps we could speak about this in a more private location?"

The goblin gave Tom a curious look before nodding his head. "Rocksnap, I require your assistance please!"

A short bald goblin walked over to the group. Once instructed, Rocksnap led Harry and Tom into a nearby room.

"Now what's this I hear about this boy's inheritance?"

"Well I would like to know if he has any, for one."

"Name please?"

"Harry Potter."

The goblin looked up from his papers in surprise. "You can't mean The Harry Potter?"

"Yes sir that would be me."

"That's the first time a human has called me sir."

"Then you can't have met many nice people."

"That's neither here nor there." Rocksnap took out a small bowl from below his desk then a small knife. Harry eyed the knife with trepidation. "Relax boy, this is for my lunch, I just needed to get it out of the way. Rocksnap chuckled as he pulled out a small pin. "Just need one drop of blood."

Harry nodded his head and held out his hand. Rocksnap pierced the skin of his forefinger and let a few drops of blood into the bowl. Rocksnap cleaned the pin and placed it back into his desk along with his knife. When done, he placed both of his hands above the bowl and muttered something under his breath. The bowl that Rocksnap was using started to glow slightly and a white orb flew out onto the table. The orb took the shape of a small key. When the light faded Harry saw a small golden key with an ornate 'P' in the keys handle.

"Alright then here is..." Rocksnap stopped abruptly when the bowl started to glow again. Four more orbs flew out of the bowl. Once the light's vanished, three more keys lay in front of Harry. One key was

gold with a ruby engraved into the handle. The second key was silver and had an emerald engraved into the handle. The last was iron and had a moonstone engraved into the handle. The last orb turned out to be a roll of parchment.

"What's going on here?" Rocksnag looked confused as he unfurled the parchment.

"What's it say?" Harry tried to crane his neck to read the parchment.

"Hold your horses, boy, I'll read it." Rocksnag put on a small pair of glasses and flattened out the parchment on the table. It took Rocksnag a few minutes to read the parchment but he wasn't saying anything while he read it.

"Well?" Tom's voice shook Rocksnag out of his stupor. He took the parchment and turned it towards Harry and Tom.

The inheritance of one Mr. Harry James Potter

Lines:

Potter (patriarchal line)

Myrrdin (patriarchal & matriarchal line; direct descendant)

Pendragon/Gryffindor (matriarchal line)

Slytherin (by conquest)

Titles:

Duke Potter

Lord Gryffindor

Lord Slytherin

Properties:

Camelot (destroyed)

Hogwarts Castle

Potter Mansion

Vaults:

#485 (Potter family vault)

#269 (Slytherin family vault)

#1 (Myrrdin family vault; special equipment required)

#2 (Pendragon/Gryffindor; special equipment required)

Their eyes went wide as they read the parchment. They were positive that this couldn't be true. Harry's head was spinning, he felt as if the room was too. He slumped backwards in his chair and ran his hand through his hair. Harry had suddenly inherited the vaults of three of the most well known wizards of all time. Harry couldn't believe his luck. Just last week he was working his hands to the bone for the Dursley's and now he was an heir to a vast fortune. Things couldn't have looked brighter than if he had inherited the sun itself.

(A/N): Okay nice little bit of story there eh? I decided to introduce Hagrid early and differently for a couple of reasons. One, He seemed out of place when Harry re-sized his staff. He, being part of the wizarding world, would know how Harry could have done what he did. Secondly, Harry is quite paranoid yes, but Hagrid never had the air of a mistrusting person in my eyes. Harry's inheritance is revealed and he owns Hogwarts Castle. Now before you get into a tizzy of 'Oh no Harry owns Hogwarts he can do whatever he wants'. No, bad trolls. Yes he owns the castle but it's just like owning a school, you have a little leeway in the goings on but mostly the government dictates how it is run. Next chapter I will explain a few other things that I read in the comments section of Leonineus' story. Now to address one review in my comments section. Yes some chapters may seem short but I learned a few years back that you never want to overwhelm the readers with too much information. I've also been reminded by microsoft works on many occasions of sentences with the following error of 'wordiness'. Sometimes my chapters will be deliberately short while others will deliberately end on a cliffhanger. Now I will say good day, good evening, and good night. Kunaiswarm signing off.

(A/N): Okay I would like to clear something up that was brought to my attention. Harry does know who Gryffindor and Slytherin are, Tom and Annette told him when they were explaining to him about the wizarding world. It mentioned they talked about Hogwarts, and if you don't mention the founders while talking about Hogwarts you are forever a muggle in my eye. It might not have been explicitly clear that he was told about them but he was. I'm actually submitting this chapter earlier than planned. I thought I was going to finish tomorrow but my muse was kind to me. I do thank GMS for bringing the issue up about the confusion of Harry knowing the founders, and the last chapter has been edited to show for it.

Edit: I've edited the first little bit to return Lily back to being a muggleborn witch. She is no longer pureblood. I made a very large mistake when writing that part. Sorry.

Harry re-read the parchment twice, just to make sure that he wasn't seeing things.

"How did I inherit all of this? I can understand mine but, who's Myrrdin?"

"Myrrdin Emrys is one of the first recorded wizards in history. The most commonly known wizard of his line was named Merlin Ambrosius."

"I'm related to Merlin?"

"So it would seem."

"And what does it mean when it says Pendragon slash Gryffindor?"

"Well you must know about Godric Gryffindor, one of the founding fathers of Hogwarts correct?" Harry nodded his head, having slightly recollecting hearing about him from Tom. "Well you know of the muggles Arthur Pendragon." Harry nodded once more. "These two men were one and the same."

"How am I related to them?"

"Your father James Potter was Godric Gryffindor's heir. He was also Merlin's heir."

"Now what does it mean by Slytherin by conquest?"

"Slytherin's last remaining heir was He Who Must Not Be Named, whom you killed as an infant."

Harry's head was spinning. Questions rose faster than could be answered. "Let me see if I get this straight." Rocksnag nodded his head.

"I'm related to my parents, obviously."

"Correct."

"How am I related to Merlin?"

"Your father was related to Merlin. Most people thought Merlin's heirs died out without continuing their line. Other's thought the heirs never announced themselves out of fear of persecution from muggles. Your father was the heir of Merlin on his maternal side."

"Right, his mother was Merlin's heir?"

"Correct."

"And I'm related to Godric Gryffindor because of my father as well?"

"Yes, on his paternal side. His father was Gryffindor's heir."

"And I killed ... you know I never found out his name. What is it?"

"We dare not speak it."

"Can you spell it?"

Rocksnag looked slightly hesitant but did as asked. He took out a spare piece of parchment and a quill and hesitantly wrote out nine letters, Voldemort.

Harry took the paper and read the name aloud, "Voldemort?"

Tom choked and Rocksnag fell out of his seat.

"Please Harry do not speak the name." Tom held his hand to his chest to try to catch his breath.

"Sorry. So I've inherited Slytherin because I defeated his last remaining heir?"

"All correct. Now let's talk about your new titles and deeds?"

"Hold on, hold on, what's this about?"

"Well since you are their heir you acquire their titles and deeds." Harry nodded his head and Rocksnag continued. "Well you now inherit the titles of Lord Potter, Lord Gryffindor, and Lord Slytherin. As for the deeds, you've acquired Camelot, Potter Mansion, and Hogwarts Castle. Unfortunately Camelot was destroyed long ago."

"Wait, I have a mansion?"

"And you also have a castle."

"But I lived in a house."

"Potter Mansion belonged to Arthur, but James never wanted to claim it. Since it was technically his it is now yours."

"Do I really own Hogwarts?"

"Yes."

"What about the other two founders, Helga Hufflepuff, and Rowena Ravenclaw?"

"Their surviving heirs never came to claim their inheritance of ownership to Hogwarts, only the treasures."

"I think I have everything straight."

"Excellent Lord Potter, shall we go to your vaults now?"

"What?"

"Shall we go to your vaults sir?"

"No, I meant about the Lord thing."

"You are a Lord and should be addressed as such."

"Harry is fine. All my friends call me Harry, well if I had friends."

"Harry Potter thinks of me as a friend?"

"Well yeah, you have a kind aura about you."

"You are too kind Harry, too kind indeed." Rocksnag smiled at Harry. Harry smiled back careful not to show any teeth. Rocksnag gave Harry his keys and the parchment. "Now let me get one of our trolley conductors. Griphook, you're needed!"

Harry turned to the door to see a small goblin. It looked remarkably like Rocksnag.

"Yes brother?"

"Lord Potter needs to be escorted to vaults one, two, two sixty nine, and four eighty five."

"Just Harry please." Harry smiled at Rocksnag and Griphook.

"Right, sorry."

"No worries mate."

"He's awfully kind isn't he little brother?"

"That he is brother."

Griphook led Harry and Tom out of the room and down a long hall. At the end of the hall was the long track that Harry was looking at before.

"Right this way Lord Potter."

"Just Harry is fine."

"You are much too kind to us lowly goblins."

"You deserve it for helping us guard our valuables."

"Thank you Mr. Potter." Harry gave a sideways glance at Griphook. "Sorry, Harry." The trio stopped in front of the tracks at the end of the hall. Griphook whistled down one of the corridors causing an empty cart to come screeching in front of them. Harry helped Griphook into the front after he stumbled on the first step. Once the three were loaded in the cart, it took off at a blazing speed.

"This is one of the reasons why you would be daft to try and rob this place Harry." Tom pointed over the side of the cart. They were now riding along a track that seemed to be floating in mid air. Harry saw the lights of a few other carts barreling along the tracks.

"Which vault do you wish to visit first?"

"How about we start at number one and work our way up from there."

"Good choice."

The cart took a sharp turn to the left and slowed to a snails pace. Harry looked over the side and saw a large dip in the tracks.

"This is where things get tricky." Harry saw Tom close his eyes and grab the handrails. "You might want to hang on for this part."

Just as soon as Griphook said this, the cart tipped forward and launched down the dip. Faster, and faster it went until Harry could barely make anything out due to the speed. Harry then caught sight of something truly extraordinary. In the center of the mass of tracks stood an extremely large stone dragon sculpture, easily twice as tall as Big Ben. The path wound down around the dragon and led past its tail into a small tunnel. Harry caught site of the many vaults lining the walls and the stone hanging from the ceiling and jutting from the ground.

"You know I could never really tell the difference between stalagmites and stalactites."

"Not now Harry." Tom looked a little green as he tried to keep himself steady even though he was sitting down.

"Stalactite has a 'c' in it for ceiling, while stalagmite has a 'g' in it for ground." Griphook turned around briefly to answer Harry's question.

"That's pretty cool, I never thought of it that way."

The cart came to a halt and the three of them stepped out. Tom held on to Harry's shoulder to steady himself.

"I never did like those rides."

Harry laughed and looked towards the vaults. He read the signs above them, ranging from twenty and up.

"Sir I think we needed to go further down. The vault numbers are too high."

"We need special equipment to get to the vaults below twenty on this side." Griphook grabbed a small device off the walls. It looked as if it was a row of bells on a short metal rod. When Griphook took it, it made a slight clanging sound, nothing like the bells Harry was used to seeing. Griphook motioned for the two to follow as he slowly went down the path in front of them.

They turned the corner and, to Harry's surprise were standing almost face to face with a dragon. It was extremely large and very pale. Even its eyes were white and glazed over. Harry assumed that the dragon had lost all its pigment due to being stuck in the dark for so long and had gone blind because it didn't need to see. Harry felt a little sad for the creature standing before him. He took a step towards the dragon but Tom pulled him back.

"No Harry, dragons are very dangerous creatures." Tom whispered this to Harry.

The dragon heard this and woke from its slumber. It sniffed the air and then roared in defiance. Griphook immediately started to shake the metal object causing a very disturbing clanging sound to echo through the chamber. The dragon reared back and started to retreat into a small cave. Once inside, the dragon lowered its head onto the floor and pulled its wing over to cover it. Tom nudged Harry over to the vaults that the dragon was guarding.

At the end of the hall, they stood in front of a large ornate vault door. The door had an embroidered letter 'M' on the front of it. Harry handed Griphook the set of keys he received. After selecting the iron key, he inserted it into the keyhole and gave a short clockwise turn.

"Now please place your hand on the symbol here."

Harry looked to where Griphook was pointing. There was a small pentacle with a large moonstone placed in the center.

Harry couldn't believe his eyes. Many old relics hung from the walls and a large pile of gold lay on the floor. In front of the gold sat a small wooden rack and a small wooden chest on top of a stone plinth. Harry walked into the vault and looked at all of his things. He walked up to the chest and pushed at the top. It wouldn't open but when he placed his hand near where the clasp should have been he heard a small hum and a click. The chest opened up by itself revealing one item. A small gold lay on top of a small red pillow. The ring had an inlaid moonstone surrounded by a half moon on it. Harry took the ring and slid it onto the pinky of his right hand. It felt very loose on him but suddenly shrank to fit.

As soon as the ring shrank down Harry felt an enormous surge of power flow through him. His heart started to race, as did his breathing. Just as fast as it came, the feeling was gone. The chest shut and resealed itself, when it did Harry heard a voice in his head.

"Until the night of the final day shall I await the ring for my new master."

Harry turned around but could see no source of the voice. When he turned back, he noticed something that had not been there previously. Upon the wooden rack lay a staff with a large moonstone orb in the tip. Along the staff were writings in some silver material that Harry couldn't read. Harry took the staff in his hand and felt a power similar to the ring. It felt as if the large power surge he felt had found it's balancing half.

"Greetings young one, I am Erwydd, staff of Merlin, heir of Myrrdin. I see I have finally found the heir to my master. May my powers be worthy of you."

Once again, Harry looked for the source of the voice.

"Relax dear child, I am speaking to your mind directly."

"So you were really Merlin's staff?"

"Yes I was. He had me crafted from rowan wood and a moonstone orb. Once created he had me blessed by elves. Which is why you can't read what has been inlaid on my side, it is written in an ancient dialect of the elves."

"I will definitely make sure you are treated with the respect that your former masters had treated you with."

"Thank you, that is all that I ask."

He turned and walked out of the vault to see the surprised look on Tom's face.

"Shall we go to the next one Tom?"

"Yes we shall."

The next vault down looked slightly similar to the first. The differences were easy to spot at a glance. On the door were two shields with lions clawing at the center of the door. Griphook took the second key, placed it in the keyhole, and gave it a small twist. As with the first door, Harry placed his hand on the small ruby in the center of the door causing it to open.

Once more, Harry saw ancient relics adorn the walls of the vault. He walked to the center of the vault, towards a familiar scene. A wooden rack stood next to a wooden chest on a stone plinth. Harry stepped in front of the chest and, as he did before, placed his hand where the clasp should have been. He heard the familiar click of the chest unlocking. Once opened, he looked inside to see a gold ring with an inlaid ruby inside the mouth of a lion. He slipped the ring onto his pointer finger. Once the ring fastened itself to the correct size, Harry felt another surge of power. Harry turned towards the wooden rack to see that a sword had materialized on top of it. He took the sword and read the inscription on the blade. He knew what sword it was even before reading the inscription, Excalibur. Harry spotted the sheath that was below the sword. He slid the sword perfectly into it then slung it across his back. To Harry, it felt natural

wielding the sword and staff. He exited the vault towards the waiting pair.

The group walked back towards the cart and sped off. Harry was too busy admiring his new staff and sword to see where the cart was going. The screeching of the cart stopping brought Harry back to the real world. He looked up at the vault that they stopped in front of and saw the sign above it, vault two sixty nine. A question suddenly popped into Harry's head. He turned towards Griphook and Tom.

"I was just wondering, why is Salazar Slytherin's vault, vault two sixty nine?"

"What do you mean Harry?" Tom glanced from the sign to Harry.

"Why isn't it either; three, four, or five? Shouldn't it be with Godric Gryffindor's vault?"

"I can't go into too much detail on that matter, due to security reasons. I can tell you this though. Sometimes, at the request of the owner or because of unforeseen circumstances, a vault's contents can be moved to another vault. Though in order to do this, the owner must give numerous samples to prove ownership. Blood can easily be stolen, just as a voice can easily be copied."

"How many security measures do you have in place?" Harry quickly realized what he had just asked. "You probably can't answer that can you?"

"Not if I want to stay alive."

"I definitely don't want that to happen. Now let's see what awaits me in here."

Once the goblin turned the emerald key, Harry placed his hand on the small emerald lying inside the Ouroboros of a snake. The door swung open to yet a third vault adorned with ancient relics. Harry stepped inside the vault towards the stone plinth in the center. Upon opening the chest on top, he picked up the silver ring inside. The ring was also adorned with an Ouroboros and an emerald. He slid the ring onto his middle finger. Instead of fastening to it, the snake looked as if it turned alive and bit Harry's hand.

"I see the destroyer of the filth that was my last heir has come to claim me. I gladly accept my conqueror."

The snake returned to its original state around the emerald. Once the ring fastened itself to the size of Harry's finger, he felt a third surge of power. Since no wooden rack was present in the vault, Harry turned to leave. A small trail of blood slid down Harry's hand. Harry sucked on the wound until the small pinprick healed. He walked out of the vault, and the three of them carted off to the last vault on the list.

Harry looked up at the sign above his parents vault. He was excited and nervous at the same time. This would be the first glimpse into his parents' life. After a nervous gulp, Harry stepped forward towards the vault. Griphook handed Harry the key to his vault. He understood what Harry must be feeling and let him take his time in opening the vault. Harry braced himself then slid the key into the hole. He turned the key and heard the mechanisms go off behind the door. Without needing Harry's touch, the door opened.

Harry's eyes darted all over the contents of the vault. There was a large sum of gold in the back. Various knick-knacks and other precious family heirlooms were lain about. Harry envisioned a happy couple living in a small house filled with mementos from their family. A single tear fell from Harry's eyes as he stepped in front of the chest in the center of the vault. When Harry opened the chest, he could have sworn that he heard a man and woman's voice. He turned, but saw no one. He looked in the chest and saw that its contents were more than the others were. Inside the chest was a small ornate looking iron basin. Next to the basin was a vial of some kind of silver liquid and a ring. The letter 'P' was set on the ring. Harry took the ring and placed it on his ring finger. The ring fastened itself on his finger, just as the others had.

Harry suddenly felt an incredible warmth flow over his entire body. He felt the presence of a dozen or more people in the room with him. He felt as if he was surrounded by his family. Harry looked down at the ring and gave a small smile.

"Harry, the ring you have just put on gives you the incredible gift of Occlumency. This can, and will, help you keep out mental intrusions. The iron basin and bottle, they are important, take them."

He heard the voice as his own. He took the bowl and bottle and placed them in a satchel that was lying next to the chest. Harry then grabbed a couple handfuls of the three different coins in the vault and placed them in a small leather bag. He tied the bag onto his belt, swung the satchel gently over his shoulder, and left the vault. He knew that he would come back here again to see just how much he could learn about the rest of his family from the mementos in the vault. Just as he left the vault, something caught his eye and he reentered it. In the corner was a small mirror, but it wasn't the mirror that caught Harry's attention. The reflection in the mirror had captured Harry's attention.

Harry had failed to notice the two papers next to the chest. Lying on top of the papers was a small leather holster of some kind. Harry fastened the holster to the other side of his belt. He picked up the roll of parchment and unfurled it. He saw that the parchment was his parents will, leaving everything to him upon their death. Harry slid the parchment into the satchel. He then picked up the other paper, it was a letter addressed to him. He quickly opened it up.

Dear Harry,

If you are reading this letter than that means that, you're father and I am no longer with you. It breaks our hearts to know that we could not watch you grow up into the fine young man that we envisioned you to be. We are truly sorry that we could not be with you in your times of hardship. I hope that my sister or our friends have taken good care of you. In the chest, you may have noticed a small iron basin and a vial with silver liquid in it. The basin is actually a Pensieve. Coupled with the contents of the vial you will be able to visit conjured versions of ourselves. Your father created the figures while I charmed them with our knowledge. Please visit soon, we miss you a great deal.

With Love,

Lilly Potter

P.S. Harry this is your father, keep a stiff upper lip and stay strong. Oh and one other thing, if you got my charms you'll sure to have a girl on your arms in no time.

Sincerely,

James Potter

P.P.S. Don't believe everything your father says.

Harry felt tears welling in his eyes as he read the letter. He felt the warmth and love that his parents had once felt for him. Even though he was overcome with sadness, he couldn't help but laugh at the postscripts. He gently folded the letter and reinserted it into the envelope. After putting the letter into his satchel, he finally exited the vault.

"You okay Harry?"

"Yes, I think I will be."

"What's that on your belt?"

"It's a holster of some kind." Harry took it off and showed it to Tom."

"This isn't an ordinary holster, it's an Auror level wand holster. It's made for easy storage and quick access. One thing though, it goes on your arm not your belt."

"I'll have to save it for when I get a wand then."

"I can solve that problem right now if you'll let me try."

"What are you going to try?"

"Let me see your staff for a second."

Harry nodded and held his staff forward towards Tom. Tom pulled out his wand from his coat pocket and gently tapped the staff twice. The staff then shrunk down to the size of a wand. Harry thanked Tom and placed the wand-sized staff into his holster. He then replaced the holster from his belt to his left arm. With everything secure and in place Harry reentered the cart with Griphook and Tom. The ride to the top was less eventful but no less enjoyable. Harry had a smile on his face all the way until the stop. Griphook bowed and took his leave, Harry and Tom bowed as well.

When Harry exited Gringotts, he was greeted by the midday sun blinding his eyes. With his morning task finally completed, he was able to take in all the shops that were around him. He started to pull Tom around to all the shops, asking if he could look inside them. He was particularly interested in the bookstore, Flourish & Blotts. Harry went inside and started ogling the hundreds of different books. Tom noticed Harry having to crane his head every so often to read the titles of the books.

"Harold you okay?" Harry didn't answer. "Harold." Tom walked over to Harry and tapped him on the shoulder. Harry remembered that out in public he was Harold Deadman.

"My glasses are a tad broken so it's a little hard to see sometimes."

"A tad bit, I would guess a lot a bit." Tom remarked with a smile as he saw the cracks all over Harry's glasses. He didn't know why he didn't see this before. "Let's take you to my friend, he's an Oculist."

Harry nodded and the two of them then exited Flourish & Blotts. A few hours later Harry was walking out of a small store near the edge of Diagon Alley. His broken glasses discarded for a pair of magical contact lenses. Harry paid extra for the deluxe package that included; night vision, a powerful zoom feature, was self-cleaning, and was magicked to stay in place so that the wearer did not have to remove them to sleep. Harry tested them out by zooming in to a bug sitting at the top of a column on Gringotts bank.

"They're amazing, thanks Tom."

"Think nothing of it Harold."

They laughed at Tom's statement as they ventured back into Flourish & Blotts. Once inside, and with a new look on life, literally, Harry scanned the books on the shelves. He had found a few that interested him and pulled them off to take a better look at them. He skimmed through the pages of the books and decided to purchase them. He brought them up to the counter and set them down.

"Brushing up on the old noggin before going to school eh?"

"Yes sir. Everything is just so fascinating. I can't wait to see what is out there that I don't know about yet."

"If only there were more children out there with the fervor to learn."

"It's never too early to learn. Now how much do these come up to?"

"Let's see; A History of Magic, Great Wizarding Accomplishments of the 20th Century, Famous Witches and Wizards of our Time, and Magical Flora and Fauna of the World. It warms my heart to see someone so young with a willingness to learn. Added all up, the total comes out to eight Galleons, seven Sickles, and thirteen Knuts."

Harry looked towards Tom for help. He had never had any money and didn't know which coins were which. Tom took Harry's bag of coins and pulled out a small handful.

"The large one's here are Galleons. We'll put eight over here for the books. The silver ones are Sickles. There are seventeen sickles to a Galleon. Tom handed over seven. Last but not least are Knuts, these small bronze coins are twenty nine to a sickle." Tom handed over the remaining thirteen Knuts.

"Thank you kindly, sirs." The man at the register rang up the purchase and handed Harry his pile of books. Harry nodded his thanks and left with Tom.

Tom and Harry stopped by a small ice cream shop owned by a nice woman named Florean Fortescue. While Tom and Harry were enjoying their treat, Harry spotted a small row of pet stores. The one that caught his eye was Eeylops Owl Emporium. He saw the many different kinds of owls and wanted to take a closer look. He quickly devoured the rest of his ice cream, which resulted in a very bad ice cream headache. He clutched his forehead to try to relieve the pain.

"You shouldn't have been eating so fast m'boy." Tom chuckled a little.

Harry laughed as well but when the pain didn't go away, his laughter stopped. Harry's vision started to blur and the pain increased. Tom saw Harry's pain increasing and a look of concern spread across his face.

"Harry, are you alright?" Tom abandoned his treat and rushed over to Harry.

Harry barely registered Tom kneeling in front of him. The pain was so severe it was as if someone had stuck a white-hot poker directly into his forehead. Harry heard snakelike laughter in the back of his head before something strange happened. Harry's scar started to emanate a dark black cloud of energy. The cloud coalesced around Harry's feet before shooting straight up into the air with a crack of thunder. People were starting to gather around the two of them and started asking questions. Tom lifted Harry out of the chair and rushed him towards the bar. Harry passed out in Tom's arms seconds later.

(A/N): Pretty interesting stuff eh? Now I feel I must clear a few things up for the readers, Harry does gain a lot of power but that doesn't make him over powered. He simply has a lot of magical energy built up inside himself, he will still have to learn spells before he can cast them. Some of the spells that he does learn before school were just ones that interested him while reading through books. I know that's foreshadowing but I felt if i didn't say it now that I would forget. The different gemstones for the different vaults signify somethings about the owner. Myrddin's was accidentally picked very well. Moonstone has a unique ability to change color depending on the angle of light and your viewing angle. It signifies mysterious power. I had a dilemma about the future years when Voldemort sends Harry visions while he's sleeping. Well with Occlumency that shouldn't happen. Well I thought up a solution to that. The scar that Voldemort gave Harry forever binds them in life, death, and mental connection. Neither know about it until it's too late. ooooo foreshadowing. Anyways, I'm dog tired and I need to wake up early for work tomorrow. Don't get too used to the quick updates. I got lucky finishing this chapter so quickly, and I wanted to submit it asap after I got GMS' review. Kunaiswarm signing off.

Okay guys author's note time. I've been reading your reviews and I thank all of you who find errors that I completely overlook. I have gone back and corrected them (hopefully). Now with the Error type 2 that fanfiction has and my internet being down all day I'm barely able to post Thursday morning ... like waaaay morning it's quarter to one. first and foremost, questions and statements that you guys have. I will answer them to the best of non-spoiler abilities. Most of these come from Mariann's, Harry was told quite a bit about the Wizarding world, especially Hogwarts, including its founders. The conversation lasted around 4 hours, plenty of time to get in a little detail. Also with Harry's upbringing it has caused him to mature quicker than normal in order to protect himself. Secondly the whole duke thing. I did find that odd but never looked it up, thanks for bringing that to my attention. Now as towards the "Harry being the only person friendly to Goblins" thing. Yes it is a bit unrealistic but if you think about it a couple of ways then not so much. The Goblins that Harry talked to might not have been treated with kindness themselves but have not heard of kind people from the other goblins. They might not say everything about their entire day to everyone that works there. Unless you are the type of person that tells everyone at your place of work about your entire day then I assume some things slip past you. Now for the issues concerning the vaults. Yes they are fully decked out with riches. Some were taken out and some were put in there by other people other than the original owners. As with Slytherin, well this is an AU as in Alternate Universe, not everything is going to remain the same. Being ... well what he is Voldemort also never knew about the slytherin vault. Now for something brought up by Ngbeken Lovette, no this is not a harem fic. I don't like harem fics too much myself, therefore I don't write them. Harry and Hermione are going to be a couple. It might border on feelings for the others whether it be Harry or Hermione or anyone of the group. But it won't go much past that. Now that all those things have been addressed you don't have to listen to me rant anymore. Enjoy Chapter 4. One last thing

Somewhere in an undisclosed location of Scotland sits a mysterious and majestic castle. This castle is known to many witch and wizard as Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Surrounding this castle is an immense forest. This forest is filled with thick, luscious trees, and creatures that man has never seen before. The forest is filled with creatures large and small, weak and powerful, harmless and dangerous. One would risk life and limb to venture into the forest ill prepared.

Within the confines of the forest, lay the grounds of Hogwarts. The grounds play home to many of the outdoor classes for the school. Aside from the routine of schoolwork, the grounds also allow one to partake in a moment of rest. Whether you like to sit under the shade of a tree with an open book in hand, or perhaps you like to lay at the edge of the lake with friends. The grounds hold no discrimination towards those who use it.

Aside from the grounds surrounding Hogwarts, the castle also partakes in an excellent view of a vast lake. The castle sits atop a cliff that hangs out over the majestic lake. Its denizens and depths are known to very few people. The mysteries that surround the leagues are unfathomable. Many students who come and go through the halls of Hogwarts only know of the surface and perhaps the occasional sighting of a friendly giant squid.

Hogwarts grounds and its surroundings are a remarkable sight, but they pale in comparison to the castle itself. Dozens of towers and battlements jut from the castle walls to touch the sky. The vast castle is home to the students for the seven years that they learn to become great witches and wizards. The interior is filled with paintings of once living people, their essence forever bound to the castle. Many of its decorations are similar to the paintings. There are suits of armor that move by themselves. There are also doors that only pretend to be doors. Even the stairs themselves have a mind of their own, forever changing the layout of the grand tower.

At the very center of the castle lies the office of the very renowned Headmaster of the school. His office is flanked by two gargoyle statues. The flanking gargoyles are two sides of the same coin. One is serious while the other is comical. The gargoyles guard a winding staircase that leads towards the office of the Headmaster. The Headmaster's office is home to various mysterious objects. Many of which sit idly by on a table collecting dust. However, the most extraordinary occupant of the office is the Headmaster himself.

The Headmaster of Hogwarts is known the world over as one of the greatest wizards to walk the earth. Though many people revere his presence, most would not see him for who he truly is. The Headmaster is a simple man, getting on in his years. He has long silver hair and a long silver beard to match. He wears half-moon spectacles that sit on the bridge of his long crooked nose. Behind

the spectacles are two aging blue eyes, the likes of which have seen many things in life.

The Headmaster was wearing a rather peculiar set of clothing. However, the only peculiar aspect that you would see is if you were a muggle. He was wearing a long robe that was clasped around his middle. The robe was a deep shade of magenta. The robe was designed with an animated set of shooting stars. The stars shot all across his robes occasionally bumping into his beard. His beard was tucked into a maroon colored sash that tied the robe closed. Atop the wizard's head sat a lopsided, pointed, magenta Phrygian cap.

The Headmaster was currently sitting at a rather large, ornate desk. Sitting atop the desk were various papers and letters of significant importance as well as a small plaque with his name on it. The plaque read 'Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore'. Letters to important members of the magical government, or letters to future Hogwarts students littered the surface. He was often bothered multiple times a day by the Minister of Magic. The Minister was always asking questions on how things should be done or how he should vote for certain rulings. The Headmaster always chuckled whenever he received post from the Minister.

Professor Dumbledore was in the middle of a rather amusing letter from the minister when he felt something in his office was amiss. He looked over the papers and scanned the front of his office. Try as he might, he could not find anything out of the ordinary. He turned back to his later only to once again feel as if something was out of place. He looked up once more this time glancing over towards a table that held a select few silver objects. The objects were usually lifeless while they lay on the table. However, tonight would prove different.

One of the silver objects, a small top with a black ring around the middle, was emitting a low humming noise. Upon closer inspection, the object was also vibrating slightly. Dumbledore was about to walk over to the table when the object suddenly sprang up and began to spin across the tabletop. The silver top spun across the table whilst the humming noise was steadily increasing in volume. Eventually the top reached a deafening volume, as well as a rapid spin.

The top then began to glow slightly until it was completely covered in a white light. The light grew brighter until the object detonated causing a chunk of wood to break away from the table. The resulting

fragmentation launched itself throughout the room. Dumbledore quickly ducked slightly to avoid the shrapnel. The slight movement saved Dumbledore the probable buzz cut that would have occurred had he not moved. The aforementioned shrapnel merely took his hat clean off his head. The piece then pinned the Phrygian cap to the wall behind him.

Dumbledore was about to examine the shattered device when other devices began to reciprocate the first's odd behavior. As with the first, Dumbledore erected a small shield charm to protect himself from the eventual shrapnel. His foresight saved himself possible scratches or injury from the resulting detonations. After the dust cleared and the charm vanished all that was left of the table and devices was a pile of shards and splinters.

Dumbledore walked around his desk over towards the broken table. He glanced over the devices before pulling out his wand. He muttered a few incantations above the devices but nothing happened. He attempted a repairing charm, which also proved useless. Dumbledore's brow furrowed in thought. How could all of these devices suddenly shatter without warning? Thoughts began to race through the aged man's head. Eventually the Dumbledore gave up his thoughts with a sigh and at least fixed his table. He then gathered the shards and placed them on top. With another heavy sigh he placed his wand back into the depths of his robe.

"Is something amiss Headmaster?" A voice behind Dumbledore caused him to turn slowly towards a wall of paintings behind him.

"So it would seem." The voice that Dumbledore had heard had originated from a painting hanging above the door to his office.

"Anything you care to share?"

"I might consider it if you promise not to tell anyone else Phineas."

"Who else would I tell?" A small smile spread across the vision of a young man with a balding head.

"It seems that the devices I tied to various aspects of young Harry Potter have been mysteriously destroyed."

"What were these devices for?"

"Some were tied into his location. While others allowed me to keep track of his power and abilities. One let me know if he was alive or not. Now all of them lay in pieces all over my office." Dumbledore finished with a chuckle.

"You seem pleased."

"On the contrary, I am most disturbed." Dumbledore took a small scarf off a shelf nearby and headed towards the door. "I think I must make a trip. If anyone comes looking for me, tell them that I'll be back shortly."

"I await your return with bated breath, Headmaster." The painting of Phineas darkened over as Dumbledore walked through the door.

Dumbledore disappeared with a crack. When he reappeared, he was standing at the end of a long road in a small suburb. The streets were lit via halogen lamps that dotted the road. Dumbledore frowned as he took out a small object from within his robes. The object looked like an elongated Zippo lighter. However, when he flipped open the cap no flames were produced. Instead, the light from the nearest street lamp left its home and darted towards the tip of the lighter. He repeated this until the street was completely bathed in darkness. Once finished he pocketed the Put-Outer.

Once finished an icy wind blew across his face. He wrapped the scarf around himself one more time to keep the wind at bay. The road looked almost sinister in the complete darkness of night. The glare of the moon on car headlights gave the image of prowling beasts in the night. The writing on the street sign could barely be made out in the pale moonlit street. Private Drive never looked so bleak than it did now. Dumbledore then slowly made his way down the street careful of prying eyes.

Some families turned away from their evening news or late night cartoons to look out their windows. Many of the families were curious as to how their houses were still with power when all of the streetlights had gone out. Dumbledore once more withdrew his wand and waved them towards the houses. With eyes glazed over as if in a drunken stupor, the families returned to their couches to watch their television sets.

Dumbledore resumed his trek down the street. With his presence now completely masked by spell and darkness he was free to end his thieving movements. He counted the houses down the road until his eyes fell on one in particular. This house looked identical to all of the other houses on the street. However, Dumbledore seemed to be able to spot a major difference between this house and the rest. The fourth house on Private Drive seemed normal enough, but normal is in the eye of the beholder.

Dumbledore walked up the short walkway towards the house. He remarked on the similarities of its appearance even after ten years of being apart. Upon reaching the front door, Dumbledore pocketed his wand and knocked on it a few times. Shortly after, he heard heavy footfalls on the other side of the door. He expected the father to be the source on the other side of the door but what he actually saw was quite different. The source of the footsteps happened to originate from a small boy. Small was giving him too much credit than he deserved. The boy had to weigh as much as a newborn calf or mare. He was also almost completely spherical, which seemed an impressive feat all in itself. Dumbledore was so lost in thought that the boy had to repeat himself a few times before he heard him.

"Who are you?"

"Albus Dumbledore and I'd like to speak with your mother. Can you go get her for me?"

The boy stood for a second before turning around and yelling towards the living room. "Mom some weird old man is here to see you!"

"Duddykins it's rude to say things like..." Her last word fell to deaf ears as she turned the corner and saw the man standing in the doorway. Vernon wasn't too far behind her.

"What ever you're selling, we're not buying it."

"Vernon, take Dudley and go to his room."

"But I want to watch the rest of my show." The boy whined as he kicked his mother in the shin.

"I said go!" She shrieked as she pointed towards the stairs.

Vernon and Dudley hurried upstairs and, as soon as they were out of eyesight and earshot, Petunia waved Dumbledore inside.

"Thank you Petunia." Dumbledore walked inside of Number Four Private Drive and shut the door behind him.

"To what do I owe the surprise of your visit?"

"I'm looking for Harry. Have you seen him?"

Petunia's face paled at the mention of Harry. Albus saw this but made no mention of it. He chose to let Petunia answer his question.

"He's not here right now."

"Surely you didn't send him outside in this cold weather."

"I can honestly say that I didn't send him out."

"Petunia, is there something you aren't telling me?"

"We did not send Harry Potter outside into this cold weather." Petunia recited this as if it had been rehearsed.

"Petunia, you do know I have ways of obtaining information that is not willingly given to me."

Petunia shuddered at the thought. "Please don't, I'll tell you what happened." Dumbledore nodded, allowing Petunia to collect her thoughts. "It was near the middle of the night a couple of nights ago. We heard him scream something about a fire downstairs. When we went to see what the fuss was about, we saw him standing over the ruined remains of a table and rug. Vernon was furious and attacked him. He ran, destroying our door in the process, into the night. Vernon shouted, 'Never come back'. Frankly I agree with him."

"Petunia, you know why he must stay here."

"I don't care anymore. He's nothing but a nuisance. If that man comes to kill him, he'll not find him and leave."

"He will also be leaving behind a destroyed house with the three of you lying dead underneath it."

"I don't ... I don't care anymore. That freak has no home to come back to."

Petunia knew she had gone too far with this. She stared into Dumbledore's eyes as he stood from the chair he previously occupied. A small sigh of disappointment escaped Dumbledore before he took out his wand. Petunia looked positively horrified at the sight in front of her.

"Now, my dear Petunia, Harry never really left the house. In fact he's just been going unnoticed."

"What are you doing?"

"Something that will insure that Harry Potter follows the destiny laid out before him." Professor Dumbledore pointed his wand at Petunia and muttered a single word under his breath, "Obliviate." He looked to his right and saw Vernon and Dudley spying on their conversation. Vernon made two steps towards Dumbledore before falling to the same fate as his wife. Dudley, on the other hand, tried to run up the stair and hide. He was quickly taken care of as Dumbledore walked out of the house.

"Now I do believe that I have a missing boy to find."

Professor Dumbledore exited the small house and walked to the end of the sidewalk. With a wave of his wand, a small golden trail started to glimmer on the ground. Dumbledore followed the trail all the way to the end of the street before it sprang off into four different directions. Professor Dumbledore frowned. How could Harry magically mask his trail at such a young age? He shook his head and followed the trail farthest to the left. Before he left the street, he pulled out the small deluminator and gave it a final click. In a flash, the street lamps and house lights lit back up. Dumbledore's patience was starting to wear thin when he found that each path would diverge into more and more paths. He waved his wand once more and the infinitely spreading paths vanished. It would be a few weeks before Professor Dumbledore would catch any word of Harry Potter, one month to be exact.

At that very moment, Harry Potter was being nursed back to consciousness. Annette had been very worried when Tom suddenly rushed into the bar whilst carrying Harry in his arms. Harry was tossing and turning in his sleep so violently that Annette had a hard time keeping the blankets on Harry. She could only pray that Harry would wake up soon. The sun started to creep through the window before Harry stirred from his restless sleep.

"Did anyone get the number of that bus that hit me?"

"No, but then again busses don't normally hit children in Diagon Alley." Annette chuckled in relief to Harry's joke.

"How long was I out?"

"Just for the night, you gave us quite a scare."

"Am I in trouble?"

"Goodness no, what would make you think you were?"

Harry slowly moved into a sitting position. "Well, whenever I did anything strange, my relatives would always..." Harry trailed off, lost in thought.

"Would always do what sweetie?"

Harry shook his head slowly, "It doesn't matter now. I'm never going back there."

Annette's brow furrowed as she thought of the possible reasons to why a child would not want to go back to their house. "Harry, can I ask you a question?"

"You already have, but I'll let you ask another." Harry managed a weak smile.

"Thank you. You don't have to answer this if you don't want to." She waited for Harry to nod before continuing. "Why did you end up in our bar half frozen to death with barely any clothes on?"

"I ... I'd done something bad."

"Harry, is there something that you're not telling us?"

"Whenever I'd do something bad my aunt and uncle would... they would beat me."

"That's terrible. Why would they do such a thing?" Annette said as she placed her hand on Harry's hand.

"Most of the time it was because they were bored."

"Why didn't you tell anyone?"

"They knew everyone. They would just tell them that I was making up stories."

"Someone had to of believed you though."

"Well, that's all in the past now. Can I ask you a question?"

"Ask me anything sweetie."

"While we were out in Diagon Alley I saw this pet store."

"Did you want me to take you there?"

"Yes, I was hoping to buy an owl there."

"You just rest for a little bit then I'll take you there straight away."

"Thank you." Harry slid back down into a comfortable position. Seconds later, he was fast asleep. Annette slid her hand through Harry's hair and quietly exited the room.

Harry dreamt once more of flying through the skies. He looked back at the girls flying with him. He was almost close enough to touch them, yet their faces eluded him. He looked up and saw the familiar bird flying high above. This time though he could make out more details. The bird was white and had a blue tint at the edge of its feathers. The song that the bird sang sounded clearer, sharper, and closer. Harry was at peace once more.

Annette walked back into the room a few hours later. She would have woken Harry up to go to the pet store before it closed but just

couldn't bring herself to do it. She saw the happy look on Harry's face and dared not disturb his slumber. She smiled and edged the door closed. She would let him rest for the remainder of the night. After all, Diagon Alley wasn't going anywhere. She walked back downstairs to the bar and started to prepare for the night guests. She would allow Harry as much peace as he could obtain.

In the now closed store of Eeylops Owl Emporium, sat many sleeping owls waiting for new owners. There was a wide variety of owls to choose. All owls were perched on their stands ready for the next day. However, one owl was different from the others. This owl refused to sit at her perch. She would bite customers that wished to buy her. She always had a mean look and stared at customers. She was a beautiful snowy owl with gray specks at the tip of her feathers. She was sleeping in the rafters with her head tucked under her wing. In addition, she dreamed a special dream. A dream, that she was proud to call her own.

In this dream, she was flying through the clouds. In the morning light, she started to sing a song. The sun's dawning rays pierced the clouds and cast beautiful shadows on the ground below. She looked down and saw something that she never noticed before. Five humans were riding on brooms below her. She saw that four of them were female and were looking at the male in front. She couldn't make out any other details besides their gender. She was about to look back towards the sun when she noticed something. The male, she could see his features. He had soft green eyes, jet-black hair, and a scar above his right eye in the shape of a lightning bolt. Above all else, he had a kind smile. The smile of the one she had been looking for all her life.

The owl awoke with a start. She fluffed her chest and preened her feathers until they were free of dirt and dust before falling back asleep. She seemed unnaturally happy. She hooted softly in her sleep as her chest rose and fell with each breath. She could not wait for dawn to arrive. Her true master had finally shown his image in a dream. She would wait for his eventual arrival. She had a very good feeling that this boy was close by. So close in fact, that she almost felt his presence.

(A/N) Dumbledore keeping tabs on Harry. Using Obliviate on his relatives. What could he be planning about his 'Destiny'. We also get a glimpse of our favorite feathered friend. What's in store for Harry

Potter? Find out next time on Drag... umm I mean Harry Potter and the Heir of Sword and Staff. Ciao

(A/N) Alrighty few words of enlightenment before I start to rant. To those of you who are wondering why Hedwig was singing, that will be answered in chapter 7, unless you've read the story by Leonineus. Thank you Mikee for pointing out about anonymous reviews being disabled, I have re-enabled it for those of you wishing to flame anonymously. Thanks to everyone who have so far reviewed about how much they like the story. I would like to stress one point that I made last chapter that someone reviewed on chapter one. Yes this is a Harry/Hermione fic. There may be some odd feelings towards the others from both Harry and Hermione but I won't get into that now. I have plans for this story to go all the way to seventh years as with Leonineus, just putting that in writing sounds daunting. Harry still has a ways to go before he even sees that awe inspiring locomotive we know as the Hogwarts Express. I will change a few things so that Harry doesn't seem omnipotent. Anyways read and review. Sorry this chapter is a tad shorter than my 4,000 word quota. By the way, I'm really wondering when they will fix the issues with FanFiction. Oh well time heals all wounds.

Harry woke early the next morning. He lifted his hand up to his head to try and sooth the dull pain that was still present. He felt that someone had placed bandages on his forehead while he slept. Harry pulled the bandages off and felt his forehead. It was rough with dried blood. He walked into the bathroom to look in the mirror. He saw that his scar had opened up slightly and was now raw looking. He splashed some water on his face to wash away the blood. He then dressed and headed downstairs. Harry saw Annette and Tom talking at the bar. When Tom saw Harry, he gave a discreet nod towards Annette. She turned and, as soon as she saw Harry, she walked over to him.

"Harry, are you feeling any better this morning?"

"Yeah a little bit, but my forehead still hurts."

She pulled out her wand and redid Harry's glamour charms. Harry once again felt the tingle of the transformation.

"We made breakfast, if you wanted any."

Harry nodded as he sat down at the bar. Tom placed a plate full of eggs, bacon, and sausage in front of him. Harry slowly ate his food while avoiding the gaze of Tom and Annette.

"Harry Annette told me about your conversation last night." Harry set his fork down on the table, abandoning his food.

"It's not something I would like to talk about again."

"It's quite alright m'boy. You tell us when you're good and ready, and only if you want to."

"Thank you."

"Now if I can remember correctly, I know a certain young man who wanted to visit Eeylops."

Harry's face lit up at Annette's comment. He quickly got up and dragged Tom towards the back door.

"Looks like I'll be going out dear." Tom said through fits of laughter.

"I'll see you both later then." Annette smiled as she readied for the day ahead.

Tom and Harry walked through Diagon Alley. The street looked so different in the morning light. Light shadows washed over buildings. Stores were just opening as people started to arrive for their morning shopping. Harry spotted the store that he had seen earlier and dragged Tom over. He looked through the window to see what kinds of owls they had. They waited patiently for the owner to open his store. Once opened, Harry walked inside. A smile spread across his face, as he looked left and right at the owls. Many were just waking up from their sleep. Harry asked the owner about the different types of owls that he owned.

One particular owl heard the bell ring, signaling a new customer was present. She instantly flew up into the rafters, unseen by all. She would only be purchased by the boy in her dream. She hopped along the rafters to get a better look. She saw the boy with the sandy hair walk towards the proprietor and ask him a few questions. She turned her head when she could not recognize him from her dreams. However, when the boy spoke she turned once more towards the boy. She looked closer and saw that the image before her was false. She looked closer and saw that, without the glamour charms, the boy was indeed the one from her dreams. Without

hesitation, she flew down from the rafters and flew to a stand next to the boy.

"Well isn't that just the strangest thing you've ever seen?" The shop owner looked confused.

Harry was perplexed with the shop owner's comment. Surely, the owls would like to meet their possible masters. He lifted a hand to the owl and gently washed it over the owl's back. The owl expanded its wings and jumped up onto Harry's arm. The sudden weight caused him to teeter for a second until he regained his balance. He felt oddly comfortable with the owl on his arm. It was almost as if he was supposed to have the owl there and was missing it his entire life. The owl gently nipped at Harry's ear to show her affection in the only way she knew how. Harry's eyes never moved from hers, the two locked for what seemed like a small eternity. Harry knew as much as the owl that they were destined for each other. Harry had found his familiar from his dreams.

"Why is it so strange?" Harry finally tore his eyes away from the owls.

"She usually bites the people who want to take a look at her. Mostly she just stays up in the rafters. She doesn't even associate with the other owls."

"I think she's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in my entire life." The owl ruffled her feathers in pride at Harry's statement. "How much is she?"

"Well since she's been here for awhile and has shied away from all other customers, I'll let you have her for thirteen galleons."

Harry didn't even bother to count out the money he handed to the owner. "Keep the change." Harry couldn't put a price on the owl that had now moved to his sitting atop his head, but business is business.

The owner looked flabbergasted at the amount he received from the boy. It was nearly triple the amount for his most expensive owl. Tom looked confused, as Harry paid neither any attention as he left the store. He followed Harry out into the alley. The two of them seemed completely oblivious to the outside world as they walked back towards The Leaky Cauldron. They were about to enter the bar

when Harry paused. He looked back towards Tom with a confused and comical look in his face.

"What's got you in such high spirits Harry? She must be a special owl to be giving you such joy."

"She is. There's just one thing." Tom looked as confused as the owl did.

"And what might that be?"

"I forgot to give her a name before we left the store. What should I call her?"

"That's something that you must figure out yourself my dear boy. Anything that I come up with would probably insult her to her deepest core."

"Nothing seems good enough." Harry's eyes furrowed in concentration when a name popped up in his head, he had just finished reading the passage on it in the book he bought last night. "How about I name you Hedwig? Do you think you could get used to that name?" Harry looked up towards his owl to determine her favor of the name. She seemed to be deep in thought for a few seconds before slowly nodding her head. Harry smiled as the three of them entered the now busy bar.

"Thank Merlin, you two came back just in time. Seems that Hogwarts let out a little late for winter break." Tom and Harry surveyed the bar laden with customers of varying age. Harry, who had been too lost in thought about Hedwig, hadn't noticed the extremely busy street of Diagon Alley.

Tom immediately set out to fill out waiting customers orders. Sure, the bar was ultimately there for older customers, but that didn't stop them from serving age appropriate drinks and meals. Harry walked over to Annette who was standing at the table taking orders. They seemed so natural together. They helped each other out so effortlessly. The complete synchronization between the two stirred something that Harry thought he had long since lost. He wished to have a family to be at one with. His ten years with the Dursleys forced him to lose his innocence at a young age. He steeled himself

against all forms of affection. He didn't know if anything would be able to remove the barrier surrounding his secluded heart.

"Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Don't worry sweetie, we've dealt with large crowds before, you needn't worry."

"But I want to help." Harry stood his ground. If anything, he would at least try to soften the barrier.

"Well you could help Tom by bringing the meals and to the tables if you like." Harry nodded his head and, with Tom's guidance, started to hand out orders. Hedwig had flown up into the rafters to escape the clamor of the crowd below.

It was quite some time before the lunch rush had ended and the bar was now only home to its long-standing regulars. Glad for the peace and quiet, Harry slumped down in his chair. He was exhausted from waiting on tables. Annette and Tom were busy cleaning up after everyone.

"That was tiring." Harry rubbed his sore arms.

"You preformed excellently."

"Maybe I should work out some and get into shape. I never had any room to do so when I ..." Harry was determined to forget about his past. "Well, let's just say I never had any room to do so."

Tom and Annette smiled at the boy. Hedwig flew down from the rafters where she had been sitting, waiting for the clamor to die down. She plopped down next to Harry on the bar and nestled her head in the cleft of his neck. Harry stroked his new companion tenderly under her chin. He was finally content, He couldn't wish for more. However, something nagged him from the back of his mind. He suddenly remembered something when he noticed the rings on his right hand.

"Where did you put my things when I passed out yesterday?"

"I put them on the dresser in your room." Annette said after thinking for a second.

"Tom, if it's not too busy, can I ask for your assistance with something?"

"I have no problem with that, but Annette might kill me if I leave in the middle of cleaning up." Tom was soon hit with a thrown tablecloth.

"I appreciate the concern, but I am more than capable of handling the regulars by myself."

Tom laughed as he followed Harry upstairs to his room. Once inside Hedwig took off from Harry's shoulder and landed on the bedpost. Harry led Tom to where his Pensieve now sat. Harry stared at the Pensieve for a few moments collecting his thoughts.

"I wanted to know more about what this is. In the note I read, it said that it would let me see my parents. It also said that I could talk to them."

"Well if my memory serves me correctly, a Pensieve does allow one to view memories of the past. Though, I don't recall the user being able to interact with the memories."

"I don't think my parents would lie to me."

"They were definitely not the type to do something like that."

Harry took a deep breath as he uncorked the stopper on the silver vial. He poured the contents into the basin, waiting for it to settle down. The contents looked more like a fog than a liquid. The basin cast an eerie blue glow on the mirror behind it, causing Harry and Tom to look ghostly. Harry was nervous and excited all at once. He was mere moments away from meeting his parents after all these years.

"Two things before we do this Harry." Harry looked up at Tom with a confused look. "One, we need to get rid of your disguise. I don't want your parents to be just as confused as you look." Tom tapped Harry's head twice with his wand causing the glamour charms to fade. "Secondly, in order to use a Pensieve, you basically have to place your face onto the surface of the liquid."

Harry nodded as they both placed their heads near the surface. Harry suddenly felt the ground fall away beneath him. Colors and memories were blazing past him at speeds that made them unrecognizable. Harry shut his eyes as a wave of nausea threatened to empty the contents of his stomach. Then, just as quickly as it had started, the fall stopped. Harry wobbled a little bit to regain his balance. He kept his eyes closed to fight off the nausea still left inside him.

Harry opened his eyes and saw that he was standing in the middle of a warmly lit living room. Strewn about were pictures of friends and family. One particular picture stood out from the rest. The picture showed a loving couple holding their newborn son. Harry looked around, taking in all the scenery around him. He had a nagging feeling in the back of his mind that he had been here before, but he just couldn't remember when. That's when he heard the voices of two new people.

"Tom, what are you doing here?" Even though Harry had never heard the voice before he recognized it instantly, his mother.

"Harry was supposed to be here." The second voice had to be his father. Harry heard the similarities between his voice and his father's voice.

Harry stepped out from behind Tom and saw, for the first time in ten years, his parents. James looked strikingly similar to Harry. He had deep hazelnut eyes encircled by gold-rimmed glasses. His hair was just as wild as Harry's was. He had his arm around, someone whom Harry new to be his mother. Lily was a remarkable sight. She had his bright emerald eyes and his smile. She had chestnut hair that flowed down past her shoulders. Harry's paranoia was playing wild games with his emotions.

"Mum, Dad, is it really you?" Harry wanted to be sure that what was before him was real.

Lily and James smiled at the sight of Harry. Harry surrendered to his emotions as tears fell down his face. He ran over to his parents and threw his arms around them. The three of them fell into each other's welcoming embrace. Harry felt that the void in his heart had finally been filled. He started to sob uncontrollably into his mother's shoulder, their soothing voices broken by sobs of their own.

"I can't believe it's really you." Tom finally found his voice as he walked over to the three.

"It took quite a bit out of us to do this but it is quite real Tom."

"There's so much that I want to ask you." Harry said in between sobs.

"We have all the time in the world son." James said as he gestured over to the couch.

Lily lead her son over to the couch and sat him down in between her husband and herself. Harry never let go of either of them. He feared that if he let either of them go or let them out of his sight, they would disappear. The four of them sat there for a few hours talking about what had happened since Harry arrived at Tom's bar. Harry told them about the rings, vaults, his new wand, and sword.

"It sounds like you've had an adventurous experience these past few days."

"Tell us about the time before you came to the Deadman's bar."

Tom looked away from his friends. He couldn't bear to tell them about Harry's past, what little he knew of it. Harry was silent for the first time in the past hour. The only sound that punctuated the silence was the crackling fire. Harry opened his mouth a few times to answer the question but no words came out. He looked like a fish out of water. He was torn between telling his parents about his life to finally get it off his chest, and experiencing once again the hardships of his childhood.

"Harry, where did Dumbledore send you to live?" James and Lily both exchanged worried looks.

"I lived with your sister and her fat arse of a husband."

"Harry, they may be a little strict but it was probably for your own good. You shouldn't judge a book by its cover."

"Lily, James, Harry may be giving them undue credit by holding back." Tom took this moment to interject. "If his behavior since his

arrival is any indication of the way he's used to being treated, then I can safely assume that you're sister and her husband did horrible things to Harry."

"I know my sister didn't like me very much but she did love her son. It couldn't have been much different. Could it?" Lily was beginning to question her own words.

Harry stood up and stepped in front of the fireplace. Lily and James looked at their son in confusion. He slowly slid his shirt over his head and threw it onto the floor. He closed his eyes and prepared himself for the next few moments. Harry heard everyone take a sharp intake of breath before he turned back towards everyone. He knew the effects of his days at the Dursley house, but in the fire, the effects looked much deeper and more pronounced.

He had horrible deep scars that splayed across the front and back of his body. Scars that looked only weeks old, as well as scars that were there from early childhood. Bruises dotted Harry's body all over. Many had healed over time but the ones he suffered days before leaving the Dursleys were still evident. The scars and bruises were one thing but what really set them off were the odd protrusions of skin where it looked like bones had been broken but were not properly tended to. The physical scars were nothing compared to the emotional scarring he had. Over the years he had built up walls to protect himself from his aunt and uncle.

"Merlin's beard, what the bloody hell did they do to my son?" James was nearly beside himself with anger.

"James, what have we done?" Lily was in tears as she walked over to hold Harry in her arms.

"It's not your fault mum, dad."

"It's Dumbledore's fault for not making sure Harry was okay at your sister's house."

"I didn't think my sister was capable of such hatred. I'm so sorry Harry."

"It's fine, at least I got out of there before something really bad happened."

"Harry I need you to make me a promise." James clasped his hands on Harry's shoulders.

"Anything, what is it?"

"When you get to Hogwarts I need you to relay this message to Dumbledore. Tell him this, and make sure you don't forget it. The Potter line is not so easily controlled." Harry looked confused at first but nodded his head nonetheless.

"Now go get some rest, we can talk again tomorrow."

"But I'm not tired, it's not even noon yet."

"Harry it's four in the afternoon. We've been talking for six hours. Besides, as we've learned over the years, too much information in a short time can be worse than no information at all." Harry opened his mouth to argue only to have it closed by his mother. "Relax, we're not going anywhere, we will always be here for you." Harry smiled then waved goodbye as Tom and he exited the Pensieve.

The rest of the day passed by in a blur for Harry, he barely remembered helping with the evening rush. Later that night he lay awake in bed talking to Hedwig about his parents. It was sometime after midnight when he finally fell into a deep sleep. Once more, he dreamt his recurring dream. He looked up in the sky and saw the more definitive outlines of his new familiar. Although he knew it to be Hedwig, the figure looked slightly different. Harry couldn't quite see it from the distance, but he didn't care. He had finally met his parents. The day could not have gone any better.

(A/N) Harry finally meets his familiar Hedwig. They seem as if they've known each other for a long time. The Pensieve Harry received revealed his parents memories placed inside. Much sadness ensued. Now what is this odd message that James has his son relay to Dumbledore about. Find out on the next exciting episode of Harry Potter and the Heir of Sword and Staff. Okay so it's not exactly an episode ... but it is a chapter. Thanks for reading guys. One parting note. To those who do not like this story (I see you there behind your screen). If you really don't like my story then just press that shiny little 'X' in the top right corner of this screen. It will cure all

what ails you. It's been great, see ya next time. This is Kunaiswarm,
signing off. Ciao.

(A/N) Not to much on the author's notes this time. I like how I'm getting so many reviews and that none of them are flames. Yes some of them are a little rough but they are just trying to help and I accept that, thanks everyone. Now on to one review that really surprised me. Yumyum22, I feel a little ... how can I say this ... honored? Maybe something similar to that. For someone who hates Harry Potter to like my story about Harry Potter is truly amazing, thank you. Now to another reviewer, TheNStorm, I really don't get what you mean by 'I need more variety'. Do you want me to overload people with a million different plot points per chapter, or did you want me to explain things better? Either way I'll be sticking to the way that I am currently writing. I have read many published books that do similar things, and they seem to do just fine. I do thank you for the comment though, I'm not trying to bash you. Other than those two, most of the reviews are along the lines of 'great chapter', again thank you for these reviews, I love to read them and wish I had more. Once again to remind my readers, anonymous reviews are up and running so don't hesitate to use it. Anyways on with the chapter.

Harry slowly began to fall into a routine while staying with the Deadmans. The regulars in the bar grew accustomed to Harry or Harold, as they knew him. Tom invented the story of his brother who had been one of Voldemort's victims. Tom took in his orphaned nephew just recently when his sister-in-law passed away from illness and grief. This was slightly similar to Harry's case so that it wouldn't be hard for him to go along with it.

Harry would usually spend his mornings reading his books that he purchased from Flourish and Blotts. Once finished with his books, he would waltz through the alley to Flourish and Blotts to read the books there occasionally. The owners grew fond of Harry over time. They let him stay there and read books even if he had no intent to purchase them, though he usually purchased the book after reading the beginning. He had so much to learn in so little time. Harry was a fast reader so it didn't take him long to finish the books he purchased.

In the evenings, he would spend his time walking through Diagon Alley looking around and familiarizing himself with the stores. He liked Quality Quidditch Supplies the most. He would spend most of his evenings perusing through the different brooms and memorabilia. He would often talk to the storeowner about the other broom types that were for sale for professional Quidditch teams. He was told

about a new model broom that would be for sale before the beginning of the school year.

Then when night fell, he would spend the time before bed with his parents. His parents would often times regale him with stories of their youth. Harry particularly like the stories of his father's friends, the antics that they pulled and friendship they had. He had wished, for most of his life, for friends like the ones of his father. He would often find himself listening to their stories without making a sound, just sitting between the two with a Cheshire smile. He never could contribute to their conversations about their past. After all, he had no past to share. He often lost himself in his parents' stories, imagining himself in those situations. It was always with great lament that he bid his parents farewell for the night.

Harry had a normal routine until one day. He was out during his usual evening stroll through Diagon Alley when he happened upon a group of older boys. The boys saw Harry's sword and immediately cornered him. They gave Harry some cock and bull story about how he was not allowed to have a sword, and that they would take it off his hands so he wouldn't get in trouble. When Harry defied the four teenagers, they resorted to violence to take Harry's possession.

Tom heard the brawl from inside the bar and immediately rushed outside to investigate. He found Harry being held down by two boys while the other two were trying to pry the sword from his hands. Tom scared the boys off by casting a few minor hexes towards them. Each boy ran off with some sort of facial blemish that looked extremely painful. Tom helped Harry off the ground and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Harry m'boy, if you ever find yourself in that situation, I want you to find either me or an adult." Harry nodded his head. "Either that or put some muscle on those bones so you can stand up for yourself." Tom then took Harry back to the bar for an evening snack.

Whatever Tom had said had really stuck with Harry. He altered his routine slightly to include a morning workout. He spent it in his room at first but quickly moved off to other places. He would often run around Diagon alley for half an hour then do push-ups or sit-ups for another half hour. He mixed his training sessions up to include various strength training and cardio. In a few short weeks, the regulars grew accustomed, albeit annoyed, to Harry's muggle

workouts. By the end of the first month, he had already formed a nice muscular tone.

Harry then had a most peculiar visit from a very old and very wizened man. Many faces turned when they saw the man enter the bar. He wore dark green robes with a matching pointed hat. Behind his half-moon spectacles, were deep blue eyes. He had long white hair with matching beard. Just as soon as the bar went quite and all faces turn towards the man, it resumed its normal cacophony of conversation.

"Albus, what brings you to my neck of the woods?" Tom stopped what he was doing to walk over to the old man.

"I received information from a very valuable resource that you have a guest living with you for the past month."

"Guest, hmm I don't seem to ... oh right, you must mean Harold."

"Harold, yes that would be the boy I am looking for."

"Why would you need to see our nephew?"

"Did you say your nephew?"

"Yeah, why has he suddenly received the attention of the prestigious Headmaster of Hogwarts?"

Just then, Harry walked in from his run. He headed to the stairs to wash up when he saw Dumbledore out of the corner of his eye.

"Harold, we were just talking about you."

"I hope it was of only good things."

"Ah there you are m'boy." Albus placed a hand on Harry's head. Harry didn't like the feeling so he tilted his head slightly and backed up a step. Dumbledore's hand fell with the loss of Harry's head for support. "Relax dear boy, I'm not poisonous."

"Can never be too cautious, can you?"

"Wise words for someone so young, perhaps we can go to someplace more private for our discussion." Dumbledore cast a sideways glance towards some of the customers who were listening in on their conversation.

Tom nodded and led them into the kitchen. Dumbledore waited for the door to close before pulling out his wand. He cast a small silencing charm on the door then turned to Harry. Harry's hand automatically went to the hilt of his sword. However, before he could do anything Dumbledore had tapped him on the head with his wand. The glamour spells wore off immediately. With a smile, Dumbledore stowed his wand once more in the depths of his robe.

"There you are Harry. I feared that I had lost you last month."

Harry, though shocked, only portrayed slight amusement with a hint of puzzled. "How and why did you think I was missing?"

Well, all students that are set to enroll at Hogwarts have their locations written down in a book stored deep within. You're name refused to give me a location. After a short time, the book almost refused to give me your name. It was as if Harry Potter no longer existed. Naturally, I went to your house to ascertain your current whereabouts. Sadly, my search was fruitless. I then tried to use a tracking spell but the paths simply diverged one too many times for my liking. However, all of that is in the past. I've found you now and that's all that matters."

Dumbledore made a move to pat Harry on the head. Harry saw this and quickly grabbed Dumbledore's hand. Tom looked shocked at Harry's defiance. Dumbledore simply looked nonplussed at the ordeal. That is until he saw the four rings Harry wore on his right hand. If Harry hadn't been looking, he wouldn't have seen the look of shock and concern wash over Dumbledore's face for less than a second.

Thoughts raced through Dumbledore's mind. Harry had somehow received his inheritance from Gringotts. Dumbledore was hoping that he would be able to hide it for a few more years. The ring of Godric accounted for the sword. He assumed, with Myrrdin's ring, he must have the staff stashed somewhere. Dumbledore looked Harry over and tried to put on a look of concern.

"I just wanted to know if you were doing okay."

"Who told you where I was?"

"When Hagrid stopped by after his latest traveling, he told me of your whereabouts."

Harry was torn between two powerful emotions. He was angry that Hagrid had told Dumbledore where he was currently staying. On the other hand, he never told Hagrid not to tell anyone. He remembered how heartbroken Hagrid was when reminiscing about Harry's parents. He would have to tell Hagrid about the Pensieve next time he saw him.

"Hagrid and I did have a rather somber conversation about my parents a month back."

"I am terribly sorry about that my dear boy. They were very good people, your parents."

Harry felt no remorse in Dumbledore's words. His eyes showed fake concern and sincerity. His body language showed slight fear in what he saw on Harry's hand. He didn't understand why the rings were so important to Dumbledore. He understood that, with the rings, he owned Hogwarts, but he would have no control over the goings on. That was something left to be decided by the Ministry and, more to the point, Dumbledore. Harry was about to ask these questions when Dumbledore held up a hand.

"Alas, I do need to return to the school. Perhaps we can talk more when you come to attend school this September."

Harry simply stared at his future Headmaster as he departed the secluded room. Harry began to wonder why his parents thought ill of Dumbledore. Yes, Dumbledore did send Harry to live with people that abused him for his entire life, but he genuinely thought it was for the greater good. He would not bode on these mixed feelings. He would let one emotion fuel his thoughts of Dumbledore, hatred. It was then that he remembered what his father wished for him to tell Dumbledore. He quickly donned the glamour charm and headed out of the kitchen to find Dumbledore had already gone. Harry cursed his forgetfulness as he trudged the stairs to his room.

Harry, for the first time in his life, was confused what to think. He knew Dumbledore was not what he appeared to be. His parents would certainly not have lied to him about that. He stepped into the washroom and discarded his clothes on the floor. He then stepped into the shower as he undid his glamour charm, and let the warm water splash over him as he mulled over his thoughts. He hated himself for doubting his parents. As soon as he finished and changed into different clothes, as if planned, a knock came from his door. He opened it to find Griphook on the other side.

"Harry Potter must come with me please."

"Sure, what's this about?"

"All will be explained in due time."

Harry quickly redid his glamour charms then closed the door behind him to follow Griphook. Griphook led Harry out of the Leaky Cauldron and towards Gringotts. A few people stared at the two of them, as they would walk by. It wasn't everyday that one would see a goblin outside of Gringotts. They reached Gringotts to find the bank slightly devoid of customers. Harry would ask about this later, the task set onto Griphook seemed too important to stop and ask silly questions.

As usual, Griphook whistled for a cart to bring them through the depths of Gringotts Caverns. One thing was different about this mine cart than the first one that Harry had rode in. It looked older, as if it was the first mine cart built for the bank. Harry sat in the back as Griphook took the handles. The familiar feeling of speeding down the tracks lodged itself in Harry's stomach. He couldn't help but grin as he felt the wind rush past his face. The cart then suddenly stopped in front of a dip.

"Harry, you will be the first human to see this part of the caverns that we are about to venture to."

"Why is that?"

"Humans are typically not allowed entrance to that part of the cavern. In fact, only goblins are allowed to go. Harry Potter is an exception though. You have been asked by the king of goblins to accompany me to the goblin city Borg af Pínulítill Vígtönn Fólk. Our clan chief

that governs over all clans has specifically requested your presence. He is King Ragnok of the Twelve Goblin Clans. It is a great honor to be summoned by the chieftain."

"I should then thank him for blessing me with his presence."

Griphook smiled as he turned back to the front. "You are wise beyond your years, young Potter."

The cart then took a sudden plunge down the slope. The cart seemed to pick up speed at an increasing rate as it plunged deeper into the chasm. Twists, turns, loops, and bends were tamed, yet further they went. Harry caught sight of what looked to be a broken section of track to his right. He wondered how the goblins would be able to fix the gap if there was no ground to stand on. His worries increased as the cart took a sudden turn for the damaged section.

"Griphook the track ahead is missing." Harry tried to get Griphook's attention, however the wind was too loud for the sound to escape his lips.

The cart picked up speed as it barreled towards the gap. Harry gripped the sides of the cart tightly and closed his eyes fearing the worst. A sudden lurch forced his eyes open as the cart hit a slope and jumped high into the air. Harry looked down and saw the sheer vastness of the chasm below him. This feeling, this wonder familiar feeling he had inside him, reminded him of his dreams of flying. He threw his hands into the air and gave a loud whoop. The cart landed with a thud, Griphook turned to check on his passenger only to see Harry's smile spread ear to ear.

Minutes later the cart came to a screeching halt. The stepped out next to an old looking cave marked with torches. Griphook beckoned Harry forward and soon they reached the other side of the cave. Harry found himself standing at the bottom of a large stone doorway marked with a mining pick, a hammer, and a gold piece insignia. Harry couldn't believe that a city this large was built miles under the earth's surface. He then had to laugh at himself. Magic could do the impossible, Harry still had to get used to that fact.

"Wardens of the Gate, I beseech you grant me passage. King Ragnok has ordered Harry Potter's and my presence."

A sudden clang like a gong sounded from high above. Harry heard the grinding sound of stone on stone as the doors slowly swung open. Griphook led Harry inside the massive gate towards the far end of the city. Harry took one last look back to see that the massive doors were operated by Ogres. Large fearsome beasts that lived in dark caves, usually found being accompanied by its goblin master.

Upon reaching the other side of the city, Harry found himself inside of a large stone temple like structure. Seated at the far end was an old yet powerful looking goblin. Harry stepped towards the goblin and bowed his head. The king returned the formal greeting and stepped away from his chair.

"Greetings, I assume you are the Harry Potter of legend."

"That he is, King Ragnok."

"He doesn't look like the description given from the Seers."

"He wears a glamour charm to conceal his identity from the humans. He wishes not to be bothered by their silly visions of fame."

"That is very humble of him. But I would like to see his true visage before I proceed."

Harry nodded his head as he undid the glamour charms. His normal form returned. The King nodded his approval. He waved his hand to his left, which sent two goblins into a side room. A few moments later, they returned ushering an older looking goblin. Harry made a mental note to ask Tom how long a goblin's lifespan was. The goblin had only a few strands of white hair left. His eyes appeared blind and glazed over.

"This, young Potter, is our most wizened and gifted of our Seers. His name is Bloodeye the Ancient."

"It seems something of great importance, with a reference of me, has come to light in your great kingdom." Harry was careful to look directly into the King's eyes as he spoke.

"You are quite wise for one so young."

"I know only as much as I can infer or I have been told." He bowed once more towards the king embellishing a hand in his direction. "Since your news involves a Seer, I would presume a prophecy has been told."

"Straight to business then, I like that." He swung his hand to his left once more and a third goblin came out carrying a large stone tome. The King read from the tome presented before him.

Now he comes, heir of four

Wielder of Sword and Staff of lore

The One of Evil's Mark, forth shall he stand

Beset by hardship from Evil's most wicked hand

The Peace-Bringer comes forth bathed in light

Master's of Gold prepare for Evil's darkest night

Harry took a moment to ponder the prophecy. It seemed to mention him specifically rather than vaguely as with many prophecies. He theorized that different races held different types of Seers. Maybe goblins could predict the future more accurately than humans could.

"I will aid you in any way that I can High Chieftain of the Twelve Goblin Clans." Harry knew all the ways to please a goblin. Constantly remind them of their higher authority over others. Express a demeanor in yourself in front of them. Look them in the eye, and never show a toothy grin.

"I hoped you would say that. Unfortunately our prophecy doesn't give explicit details as to what we were supposed to do for you and you us."

"Then do as you wish with me."

King Ragnok nodded as he waved his hand a third time, only this time to his right. Moments later two goblins came out of a small room carrying a large chest between them. They set the chest down, not in front of King Ragnok, but in front of Harry.

"Open it, Harry; it contains gifts from us to you."

Harry undid the clasp on the chest and lifted the lid, revealing its contents. Inside the chest was a set of blackened clothing along with a dark brown cape, and one engraved Kris in its holster. Harry looked up at the King with uncertainty. The King assured him of his ownership of the gifts. Harry then looked back down at the gifts given to him. He pulled them out one by one.

"The clothing is made out of basilisk hide, and is impenetrable by basic to moderate level spells. The cloak is made of dragon hide; it too is impenetrable only by the strongest of dark magic. You will still feel the brunt of the magic but not the effects. A stunning spell will still knock you over but not knock you out. The Kris is one of my own possessions that I bestow upon you. It has brought me luck for my years of ruling. I now give my luck to you." The King described each gift as Harry donned them. The clothing felt heavy to Harry but he knew he would grow accustomed to wearing it with his increasing strength and endurance.

"I thank you King Ragnok for these gifts. You are a kind and just ruler." Ragnok smiled for the first time, abandoning the custom of the closed smile. He showed Harry a wide toothy grin, signifying Harry as an equal. King Ragnok then bade them farewell.

Harry and Griphook ventured back into the ground level region of Gringotts. Harry redid his glamour charm as he walked into the main hall. With his newfound gifts, he exited the building into the evening light. The light from the sun cast a shadow from his cloak onto his face. He pondered the true meaning of the prophecy about him. He wondered what would entail him becoming a bringer of peace. He also wondered what evils were left in the world to cause such a prophecy to be made. That would have to wait for another time, as Harry wished to continue in his evening ritual at Flourish and Blotts. Tomorrow would be another day to ponder.

(A/N) What's this? Dumbledore has found Harry via Hagrid. It's not his fault don't worry fans. Harry forgets to relay his father's message but there is always another time for this. And now we hear something about a mysterious prophecy involving Harry from the goblins of Gringotts. What could it mean? Who is this almighty evil? Tune in next time for another exciting chapter of Harry Potter HSoS. Yes it was a tad short once more, I do apologize for this. Though the

next chapters are significantly longer. I am almost up to chapter nine but am still going over chapter seven and finishing chapter eight. For those of you getting antsy, my muse has kicked in full force and I might be able to get a chapter out sooner than next Wednesday. This is Kunaiswarm, signing off. Ciao.

Disclaimer: I should probably start doing this every chapter. I don't own anything from Harry Potter, unless specifically stated. I will definitely make sure before I claim something. If it belongs to someone else or belongs to J. let me know and I'll give credit where credit is due.

(A/N) I'm gonna have fun with this author's note -evil grin-. Me4Ever999, I don't know if what you typed was a comment or question, so I'll just elaborate. Dumbledore didn't get him out of that abusive house because he didn't want to, he thought the abuse would toughen him up. Children are forced to live in abusive houses regardless if anyone knows it or not, it's an unfortunate part of life. People either don't care enough or don't want to do anything about it, it sucks I know. Thanks for the review though. apAidan, while I was confused at your comment I will elaborate. Dumbledore didn't do anything to Harry during their meeting because he still wants to put up the appearance of being the "White Wizard". Thanks for the review. dennisud, you make a good point. Originally Leonineus wanted to have them all together, I don't know how far I will do this for my version but it will be interesting ... I hope. Thanks for the review. Now to everyone who keeps posting wondering if Dumbledore is the ultimate evil of the goblin prophecy, only time will tell -wink-. Actually I'm not even sure myself what I'm going to do with that prophecy, but I do have theories that I'm running through with some friends of mine. Thanks for the reviews.

Nyeste, you deserve your own paragraph. While I do like constructive criticism, I do not like destructive cynicism. The goblins are not fawning over Harry, they are merely thanking him for the compliments that he gives them, THIS IS NORMAL. Another thing, goblins are not warriors, at least not in any of the mythology that I've read. Goblins are sneaky, conniving, "Be nice to you one second, steal your wallet the next" type of people. The reason they guard the vaults for the wizarding world is probably because they are good at hording shinnies and sparklies. Also, they do understand very well that Harry is indeed a customer. Why else would they go through the trouble of identifying him by blood if they didn't? You're next qualm confused the shit out of me. If I go to a place of business and I see the people helping me converse with their coworkers, as long as it doesn't beset them helping me, I'm perfectly fine with it. I really don't know where you work, but where I work customers mostly enjoy the friendly banter that I have with my coworkers. Now for your last bit of flaming. Yes, Excalibur was indeed returned to the lady of the lake,

and yes, Morgana might have stolen it afterwords. Just know that it's been 1500, yes that's fifteen hundred, years since Arthur reigned. Guess what people do with that kind of time, THEY FIND THINGS!. Also just keep something in mind. This is not a story about King Arthur, he is only mentioned in it, this is a story about Harry Potter. - gasp- Shocking I know. Another thing, this is my story, I'll write it however I god damn well please. Only interesting possibilities suggested by other people will change that. Good day sir.

Sorry for that long tangent. Thanks to everyone who reviewed. Enjoy Chapter 7, I will no longer banter until the end of the chapter.

When Harry returned to The Leaky Cauldron, it was nearing the end of the evening rush. Harry walked inside and sat down at the bar. He looked around at everyone staring at him. He was not used to the staring and it concerned him a little bit. He felt that all the eyes were trying to penetrate him down to his core. Harry was beginning to become slightly nervous. His hand slowly started to rise towards Excalibur. However, before he could act, Annette had turned her attention towards the group.

"Oi all you lot, back to your drinks. I'll not have you turning away customers because of your incessant staring." Annette was brandishing a bread knife at the patrons as if she wielded a weapon of ultimate power.

The group wavered in their stares and returned to their drinks. As soon as Harry felt the eyes leave him, he relaxed and let his hand drop back down to his lap. He let out a breath that he didn't know he had been holding. The other was still firmly gripped around his wand. Even with the sense of security that Annette had given him, he still had not fully calmed down from the event.

"Good, now I expect you to keep it that way." Annette looked fierce. If Harry didn't know her he would think she were a banshee with the way she looked. Her expression immediately changed as if she flipped a switch. She gently laid a hand on Harry's shoulder. He would have flinched away had he not known that it was Annette standing beside him. "Can I get you anything dear?"

"Don't you recognize me?" Harry tried his best not to laugh. The cloak he was wearing covered his face and he was masking his voice.

"I'm sorry, I usually remember all the regulars that come in here. Perhaps you're thinking of a different bar." Annette looked a little puzzled as Harry lifted his hand to his cowl.

Harry pulled back his hood to reveal a smile that would make the Cheshire cat jealous. Annette did a double take to make sure what she was seeing was real. She called Tom over just to make sure.

"Tom, a strange little boy has come in to our pub claiming to be our little Harold. Do you recognize him?"

Tom poorly hid a smile as he approached his wife. He placed an arm around her waist and shook his head. "Nope, I don't reckon I've seen him before in my life."

Harry's smile vanished completely from his face. He didn't want to believe what he was seeing. He felt betrayed by the people who had taken him in. He thought hard to find a reason as to why they wouldn't remember him. He thought he was dreaming but the dull pain that was still evident in his forehead proved otherwise. The only thing that he could think of was that they finally came to their senses and thought of Harry the way his Aunt and Uncle did. Tears began to well in Harry's eyes as he ran from the stool to his room. Tom and Annette looked worried as they followed the flash that was Harry passing them.

"You don't think?"

"With his upbringing, why wouldn't he?"

"Surely he knew we were joking?"

"Tom, think for once please, he probably doesn't know what a joke is."

"We better do something quick, before he does."

Annette nodded as they both headed towards the stairs. Tom turned back towards the patrons.

"We will be right back. If anything has been taken there will be hell to pay." Tom glared at his patrons as they slowly nodded.

Harry pushed through his door and locked it from the inside. He started to throw his clothes onto the bed haphazardly. Tears continued to form rivers down his face. He knew he shouldn't have trusted them. He was a fool to think that things could change in his life. He paused as he looked back towards his dresser. The Pensieve sitting on top of it was softly glowing, casting deep shadows on the wall behind it. Hedwig was stirring from a restful sleep as she softly hooted her indignation at being woken up. He gently picked up the Pensieve and poured the contents back into the bottle that he had placed next to it. He filled up the small sack with the bottle and Pensieve before he turned towards Hedwig.

"Come on girl, we're going to be leaving here."

Hedwig tilted her head in confusion. She could sense that her master was in pain but she could see nothing wrong with him. When she spotted the tears, she flew over onto his shoulder and gently nipped at his ear. He couldn't help but laugh through the tears as he swept his hand over her chest. At least he could trust his familiar never to leave his side. He gently caressed the bag that held his parents memories and walked over to the bed. He pulled the bed sheet around his clothes and tied of the ends to form a small sack. He turned around to see Annette and Tom standing in his doorway.

"How did you get in? I thought I locked the door."

"Magic let us in dear." Annette was talking so softly that Harry barely heard her.

"Well I won't be a problem for you anymore. I'm just going to take my things and leave." Harry tried to walk past the Deadmans, tears burning in his eyes. Before he made it one foot past them, Tom placed a hand on his shoulder that caused Harry to freeze. He often knew what that gesture meant at his home. He prepared himself for the farewell beating that he thought he deserved. Harry would have never guessed what happened next. Tom and Annette had bent down to be on eye level with Harry. Harry felt two pairs of arms wrap themselves around Harry.

"Harry, we want to apologize for what we did."

"I'm never good at reading the subtle things. That's why I married Annette, so she could do it for me."

"If we'd known what that would have done we wouldn't have said it."

"We love you Harry, with all our hearts. I know we've only known you for a few days, but it feels like forever."

"But you said you didn't remember me."

"We could never forget you Harry."

Harry smiled as he threw his arms around Tom and Annette.
"Thanks."

"Now there's just one thing."

"What?" Harry looked a little worried at what they wanted.

"What are you wearing?"

Harry lifted his cloak a little and looked down at himself. Harry then vaulted into the story of the prophecy that the goblins had about him. He told them of their city hundreds of miles below Gringotts, and about the ogres that he saw there. Then he started to tell them about the gifts he received to aid him. Soon he had forgotten the earlier incident as he told them of his tale.

"So they have a prophecy about you?"

"I guess so. They showed me a blind seer of theirs that told the prophecy. He looked really frail but I just couldn't doubt his words."

"What about the things that they gave you?"

"Yeah, the clothes are made out of basa... basalik... basi... um."

"Basilisk skin, really?"

"Yeah Basilisk skin, at least that's what they said."

"How did they get that? Basilisks are supposed to be really hard to kill, let alone find."

"I don't know, maybe they have one in there guarding the vaults."

"Even the cloak is made of Basilisk skin?"

"No, the cloak is made of Dragon scale."

"Those are pretty nice gifts."

"That's not all though. They also gave me this Kris dagger." Harry retrieved the dagger from his belt sheath. He showed them the dagger and the runes that were carved into the blade.

"What do the runes do?"

"They're supposed to give you luck."

"Good luck or bad luck?"

"I don't know, he didn't specify."

Harry was about to go into more detail about the escapade into the depths of Gringotts bank when he heard a light tapping at his window. The trio turned around to see that, in the midst of the story, Hedwig had flown over to the windowsill. She tapped the glass a few more times to let them know that she wanted to be let out.

"Oh dear, look at the time. We left everyone downstairs to come up here."

"I hope they didn't do anything."

"If they did they shall succumb to a woman's wrath."

"Hell hath no fury, eh?"

"You better believe it." Annette walked up, not without giving Harry one last hug and a kiss on his forehead, and left to the bar.

"Harry, do remember that we love you and nothing will change that. Now why don't you get ready for dinner, I'm sure you're hungry after everything that had just happened."

Harry nodded as Tom gave Harry a reassuring squeeze on his shoulder. Tom then gently patted Harry's back as he got up and left. Harry smiled at Hedwig as he let her outside for the night. Harry then returned everything he had packed up to its original places in his room. He removed his heavy garments and gently laid them out on the bed. He made a mental note that he would have to work out until he no longer felt the weight of his new clothes as a burden. He then patted himself down and wiped the tear trails from his eyes. He pulled open his door and headed down for dinner.

The next day Harry woke up early, even before the sun rose. Hedwig had flown in with a kill that she was finishing as Harry walked past her into the bathroom. He took a quick shower and dressed for a morning run. He decided that just running around Diagon Alley was a little short of a run so he opted to head out the front door instead. He inhaled a breath of fresh air as he saw cars traveling towards their destinations for the morning commute. He took off down the sidewalk at a brisk pace. He didn't want to push himself too hard. After an hour of running, Harry turned back towards The Leaky Cauldron. He entered just as the sun made it past the top of the taller buildings.

Harry was greeted to the usual morning patrons. Many of them knew Harry by now and greeted him by name. Harry said his hellos as he walked towards a small corner of the bar. He then started on his strength regiment of his workout, Sit-ups, push-ups, squats, and lifting weights. The weights were usually small bricks that were charmed with weight charms. The patrons soon grew used to his form of 'muggle' training. However, they never stopped expressing their annoyance to it. Harry soon realized that they were only poking fun at him and meant nothing by it.

Soon all of the residents of Diagon Alley were used to Harry's random meanderings. He would waltz into a store just to pass the time until midday when he would head into Flourish and Blotts to read some of their books. They were against him reading the books and putting them back. They would always tell him that their store was not a library. Harry soon realized that he was being more of a nuisance so he opted to purchase nearly every book he had read in their store. The list included a copy of almost every book in Flourish and Blotts. He realized he would need something else to carry books in than a small satchel.

Harry bid the owners of Flourish and Blotts farewell, insisting he would return with a solution. He looked around at the different stores around Diagon Alley hoping to find one that he needed. He spotted a small store in between the Apothecary and Quality Quidditch Supplies. The sign read, 'Phil's Finished Furnishings.' He entered the small store to find that the inside was much larger than the outside. The storeowner quickly walked over to Harry with a smile on his face.

"Welcome to my humble store, my name is Phil. Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Yes, I was wondering if you had anything that I could use that can fit a large number of items in a small space."

"My dear boy, anything can be charmed with a bottomless spell. What sort of carrying apparatus were you hoping to acquire?"

"Well I'll need a trunk next year for my things when I go to Hogwarts."

"We have a vast array of trunks for one to choose from."

The owner ushered Harry towards one side of the store that held a single trunk. Harry looked at the trunk then at the owner.

"You only have one left?"

"No, no, no, we have many different kinds. The trunk will change based on the patron's desire. Merely speak which accessory you wish to use and it will be added, within reason mind you." The owner bent down and whispered the last part. "No need to have a trunk that can fly when you can use a broom."

"Too true, that would be a little too much."

Harry started to rub his chin in thought. He knew what he needed right now but started to think of the different possibilities. He could have asked for pretty much everything he could think of. Then he remembered the last part of the owner's instructions, 'almost everything'. His brow furrowed in concentration.

"Would you like a list of possible accessories?"

"That would be excellent, thank you."

The owner disappeared for a few seconds before returning with a small leaflet. Harry took it while nodding his thanks. He began to search through the leaflet, trying to decide on the additions he would purchase. Money wasn't a problem for Harry so he decided not to hold back. Harry smiled when he finally made up his mind on what he would be purchasing.

"Ah, I recognize that look anywhere. Have you finally decided on what you would be getting today?"

"Yes, sir, I have. If it wouldn't be too much trouble, could I get a trunk with seven compartments, each with a bottomless charm on them? Oh yeah, could I also have a feather light charm on it, as well as a cleaning charm?"

"Just look in front of you and you shall see what you seek."

The owner gestured to the trunk in front of him. The trunk had magically changed shape. The box shaped trunk had extended to more of a rectangular shape. The color of the wood changed to black. Seven locks appeared on the front as well as a crescent moon and store branding in the center.

"The brand shows that it is from our shop, I hope you don't mind."

"Not at all, in fact it's perfect."

Harry paid the owner the requested price and left the store with a smile that could make the happiest person in the world jealous. The owner taught him a spell to shrink and enlarge the trunk so that it could be carried in his pocket. Harry decided to apply small sticking charm to it and attached it to a small chain that he purchased at the store as well. He was wearing his shrunken trunk around his neck like a medallion. Harry walked back into Flourish and Blotts to find the owner finish his order. The owner waved Harry towards him and set his quill down.

"Harold, good to see you've returned. Have you found a suitable container for your books?"

"Yeah, I just bought this trunk with a bottomless charm on it." Harry placed the shrunken trunk on the floor. He then stepped back and cast an enlargement charm on it.

"That will do nicely." The owner walked around to the trunk and examined it for a few seconds before he turned back to Harry. "Which compartment did you want to place your books into?"

"Hmm, I didn't really think that far ahead, how about you put it in the third compartment." Harry used the key he received in the third lock of the trunk. When he opened it, he saw what looked like a vast storage room.

"You didn't want us to just throw the books in there, did you?"

"I guess I forgot to buy some shelves or bookcases for it."

"Don't fret my boy, we'll order some for you and have them installed."

"Thanks ... um, you know I never learned your name."

"My name is Benjamin Blotts. Most people just call me Ben."

"What about your partner over there?" Harry pointed to the tall man stocking the shelves.

"That's my friend, Frederick Flourish."

"I'll make sure to remember your names next time I visit."

"We look forward to it my dear boy."

Harry waved goodbye to the two owners as he left the store. He couldn't wait until his trunk's third room was turned into a library. He wondered how many books he actually ordered. He told them that he wanted one of everything that they carried. With any luck, some of the books would be spell books for school. He would try to get an early start on a couple of those.

Harry's next meanderings took him through the various stores of Diagon Alley. He stopped by Eeylops to pick up some owl treats for Hedwig as well as a roost for her to sleep on. After shrinking the

roost down and placing it in his pocket, he headed out of the store. He then visited Florean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlor. He quickly noticed that the owner's wife wasn't working today.

"Excuse me, Mr. Fortescue."

Mr. Fortescue turned towards Harry and smiled. "Harold my boy, what brings you here today?"

"Well I was going to get a quick snack if that's not too much trouble."

"Oh, it's no trouble at all."

"Where's your wife, if you don't mind me asking?"

"It seems that my better half has come down with a slight fever. I have condemned her to bed rest for the remainder of the day." Mr. Fortescue finished the comment with a smile.

"Is there anything that I can do to help?"

"Now that you mention it, I do need a few boxes from the back. I would get them myself, but as you can see, the lunch rush is about to hit."

"Don't worry I'll get it for you." Before the owner could dissuade Harry, he was already through the backdoor.

Harry, whom helped Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue before, knew where most of their supplies were kept. He walked around the frozen backroom until he found his target. A small pile of boxes was stacked near the rear of the store. He grabbed two boxes and quickly brought them to the front. Upon exiting, Harry found Mr. Fortescue being barraged by children of all ages asking for different ice creams.

"Thank you my boy, I had nearly run out. You are indeed a lifesaver."

"I'll be right back with the rest. Then I'll help you with the crowd."

"Thank you again Harold."

Harry smiled as he retrieved the last few boxes. Afterwards, Harry began to take the orders customers made to them at their tables. It was near chaos for the hour that Harry was there helping Mr. Fortescue. However, around two thirty, the lunch rush died down. Harry and Mr. Fortescue were busy cleaning tables after the rush. Harry just finished clearing up one table when Mr. Fortescue got his attention.

"Oh dear, is that the time already?"

"What's wrong Mr. Fortescue?"

"You should probably be getting home my boy."

"It's not all that late, is there something the matter?"

"No, not at all, I just need to check on my wife. Besides your Aunt and Uncle may need help with their business. Run along now."

Harry raised an eyebrow in confusion but nodded his head nonetheless. He said his farewells as he turned on his heel out the door. Harry wondered why Mr. Fortescue had rushed him out of his shop so quickly. He assumed it might be because of his concern for his wife. Harry smiled at how devoted Mr. Fortescue was to his wife. He wished one day to have someone in his life that he could be devoted to as well. Harry quickly shook the thought out of his head.

"I'm way too young to be thinking like that." He said this to himself as he opened the door to the bar.

Harry noticed the lights were out in the bar. He did a quick double take to make sure that night hadn't snuck up on him while he was deep in thought. It was still daylight so something had to be up. Harry squinted and activated the night vision on his contacts. He saw slight movement from the corners of his eyes. He was about to pull Excalibur out of its sheath when the lights suddenly flashed on.

"Surprise, Happy birthday Harold Deadman," sudden shouts assaulted Harry.

Harry looked around to see everyone from Diagon Alley in the bar. Confetti was pouring from the ceiling and a large banner was strewn over the bar. The banner read 'Happy Birthday Harold Deadman'.

Harry was taken aback for a few seconds. His mind just wasn't registering what was going on in front of him. He knew about these for ten years but never once did he ever experience it. He just couldn't believe that the Deadmans threw him a surprise party.

"You did all this for me?"

"Well who else in this bar has the name Harold Deadman?" Annette smiled as she gave Harry a hug.

"How did you do all this?"

"You were gone all day so this wasn't really that hard to pull off." Tom placed his hand on Harry's shoulder and gave it a soft squeeze.

"Besides with you gone it gave me enough time to make your cake." This voice came from behind a towering cake that was being levitated from the kitchen towards the large table in the middle of the bar. Harry tilted his head but could only see who was behind the cake once she stepped out from behind it.

"Mrs. Fortescue, I thought you were sick in bed."

"Well someone had to keep you at the shop, and a lack of help seemed to be the best way to stall you. We do thank you so much for the help you give whenever you visit."

"But, why do all this, just for me?"

"Everyone has grown quite fond of you. That is why we decided to throw you a little surprise party." Harry turned to see Mr. Fortescue standing behind him.

Harry thought he was dreaming. Never once did the Dursleys celebrate his birthday. He was always tormented and ridiculed on that day. Now, Harry was surrounded by people that cared for him. He felt a strange tightness in his throat as he tried to speak. Nothing came out so he resorted to smiling. He looked around at everyone. All the shop owners and the regulars at the shops were here. All were raising glasses of Butterbeer and smiling. Harry felt a tear slip down his face.

"Harry what's wrong?" Annette started to look concerned.

"It's nothing. It's just that I'm so happy right now. These are happy tears."

"Well then how about we celebrate your birthday."

Harry joined the group of people who were standing around the cake. Annette and Tom lit eleven candles on the top of the cake. Harry paused for a minute, he couldn't think of anything to wish for, nothing came to mind. Then he knew what he wanted. He wished that he would meet the girls in his dream soon. He took a deep breath and blew out all the candles in one go. The group cheered and yipped as Harry laughed.

Harry spent most of the party talking with all of the adults. He listened as they all told him their parts in the party. Many of them were sent to distract Harry while the others moved items around. Harry was enthralled in the stories that were being told. He couldn't believe how they slipped something this big past him. He didn't care though, he was too happy.

"Okay birthday boy I think you've done enough chatting. It's time to open your presents."

"I've got presents?"

"Well what else did you think you'd be getting on your birthday?"

"Sorry, I guess I'm still a little surprised at all this."

"Well, there's no need to dilly dally, open your presents."

Harry nodded and got to work on his gifts. He ended up receiving a book on the different types of brooms from the owner of Quality Quidditch Supplies. He received his 'library' from Fredrick and Benjamin with a promise of no charge. Harry argued but they didn't budge in their decision. He then received a rather nice looking cage for Hedwig when she needed to be transported through the muggle world. The owners of Gambol and Japes Joke Shop gave him a few joke kits to try on his friends once he arrived at Hogwarts. Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue's present to Harry was the cake, which he happily accepted. Tom and Annette gave Harry his very own magic radio so he could have something to listen to while he was in his room.

"Thank you all so much for the gifts, they're great."

The group insisted that it was no trouble on their parts. They just wanted Harry to have a nice party for his birthday. Harry spent the rest of the night chatting with the guests. Night fell all too quickly for Harry and the guests had to leave to tend to their shops or other business. Harry thanked them all for coming to his birthday party as he saw them to Diagon Alley. When the last guest left, Harry closed the door and turned to the Deadmans. Harry smiled as another tear raced down his face.

"Harry, are those more happy tears?"

"Yes, you both are too good to me."

"We do what comes naturally."

"My Aunt and Uncle never celebrated my birthday. Well unless you count the extra chores and locking me in my cupboard for the day. But that's all over now."

"Good riddance I say."

"Right you are Mr. Deadman."

"Come on Harry, you know by now you can call me Tom."

"Yes, and you can call me Annette."

"Can I call you Aunt Annette and Uncle Tom?" Harry looked at the ground and shifted his feet as he asked this.

"Nothing would make us happier Harry." Harry looked up at the Deadmans with a great big Cheshire smile. He then ran towards them and embraced them.

"Thank you so much for everything."

"Gather your things and head upstairs before you make us cry." Annette was already on the verge of tears as she said this.

Harry nodded his head and walked over to the table that held his presents. He opened one of the compartments of his trunk and set the presents inside to be sorted later. Once finished, he shrunk his trunk down and placed it on his necklace once again. He then raced upstairs to tell Hedwig about his day. He ran into his room and closed the door behind him. He sat down on his bed and waved for Hedwig to join him. Hedwig, who had been sleeping, hooted softly as she flew over to Harry.

"I just had the best birthday party ever. You wouldn't believe it."

"Well I was listening to it for the better part of the evening."

Harry turned his head towards the door to see where the voice came from. His door was still closed. He then looked towards the window, also closed. He slowly turned his head to his familiar. He saw, what looked like, Hedwig tilt her head waiting for Harry to continue.

"Did you just hear that?"

"Of course I heard it. I said it."

"You ... you can talk."

"Sort of, I can speak directly into your mind. I must say, it's quite spacious in here."

"Hey, my head's not that empty." Harry found it hard to believe that he was having an argument with his familiar.

"We'll discuss the vastness of your mind on a later date. The real reason why I'm talking to you is to give you your present."

"You got me a present? How did you get me a present?"

"You need to think outside of the box. Be patient, all will be revealed shortly."

Hedwig then flew off the bed towards the roost that Harry set up as he was talking to Hedwig. She then started to sing a song for Harry. Harry was positive that owls couldn't sing though. Suddenly the hooting song grew higher in pitch. The pitch was so high that it sounded like angelic bells. Then Hedwig began to emit a soft white

light. Her form started to shift and change. When the light faded Harry no longer saw his owl sitting on the roost. What he saw was a completely different animal altogether. On his roost sat a beautiful bird. This bird had white feathers with blue tips at the end of them. She was very slender with a long neck.

"How do you like my true form?"

"You're beautiful. But what exactly are you?"

"I'm what I've always been, a phoenix."

"You were an owl a second ago."

"I'm what some people would call a were-avian. In truth, a phoenix does not show its true form unless they have found their true master. We can become any other aviary creature we desire until we show ourselves to our master. Once we have shown our true form, there is a possibility of not being able to turn back. We live as long as our true master lives."

"But, are you still Hedwig?"

"Gracious, and here I thought I picked the smart one. Of course I'm still Hedwig, nothing's changed, save for the outside."

"I'm sorry for the confusion, it was just so sudden." Harry was about to continue when he heard his door open.

"Harry, are you alright we heard something that sounded like bells but..." Annette stopped mid sentence when she saw Hedwig. "Harry, what happened to Hedwig?"

Hedwig shook her head as Harry laughed. "This is Hedwig."

Tom, whom just arrived, repeated Annette's question to receive a similar response from Harry and Hedwig.

"So Hedwig was actually a phoenix in disguise? She was just waiting for her true master to show up, right?"

"After we met in Eeylops we just knew who each other was, it was weird."

"And she was just pretending to be an owl?"

"Yep, until she wanted to change back into being a phoenix, she stayed being an owl."

"Well now I've seen everything." Tom threw his hands up in defeat as he left the room.

Annette smiled as she too left the room. "Goodnight Harry, don't stay up too late with Hedwig."

"Don't worry I won't."

"You really should get some sleep. You had a very tiring day by my guess."

"Perhaps you're right, I will get some sleep. I'll see you in the morning beautiful."

"Flattery will get you nowhere with me Harry Potter."

Harry could swear he saw Hedwig smile. Maybe he just felt it in his mind's eye. Harry drifted off to sleep soon after to, once again have his dream of flight.

(A/N) Okay, many things revealed in this chapter. I did touch on a few people's issues with "owls can't sing". Now you know why Hedwig could, because she's not an owl. And I have to thank Celexs Draconia whom pointed out my mistake a few chapters back. I decided that some shops would be easier run if they were managed by the husband and wife of the family, hence Mrs. Fortescue helping Harry that one time. Now I will keep her name Florean, though I have yet to decide on her husband's first name. Some things will change from J. side of the story. Oh yeah, before I forget. I actually found something I own in this chapter. Phillip Faherty and his story "Phil's Finished Furnishings" are owned by me, at least to the most of my knowledge. I couldn't find a furniture store in the small amount of time that I looked so I created one. If you wish to use either Phill or his store you can. All I ask is that you don't say it's yours. Sorry for my unusual ending author note but I just needed to explain a few things. Hope you liked this chapter. Read x Review. I always like to

see reviews. Good morning, good evening, and good night. This is Kunaiswarm, signing off. Ciao.

(A/N) Welcome back loyal readers to another chapter of Harry Potter HSS. I would like to thank all the reviews and favorites I received since the last chapter. I would also like to apologize to one reader, Nyeste. While I do not regret flaming back I do regret not realizing the valid points he did make. The Goblins were a proud and noble warrior race, I forgot. But in my version of Harry Potter, they are sneaky and prefer more guerrilla warfare. The thing about Arthur and Excalibur, that's just off canon for my story. And I looked back at my previous chapters, I can see how it looks like they are fawning over Harry, but in my eyes I see it as someone thanking another person for a compliment. Other than that, I am again sorry Nyeste for blowing up on ya. Onward to answering questions.

Lothynagul, thanks for the review. Yes, they only meant the 'no charge' towards the shelves and such for the library. In this chapter I answer that question, when I should have done so in the last chapter. As for Hedwig, only time will tell. Fury074, thanks for the review. I know I said Hagrid was twelve feet tall or more, but it was more of an exaggerated guess from a young boy. Though thanks for letting me know his actual height, and for the wording errors in chapter 4 and 5 it has been fixed. The Hermit, thanks for the review. I'm sorry that you find the use of names rather than personal pronouns annoying, but that's just how I write, sorry. IronLad, really really thanks for the review. You made me realize why I subconsciously hated, actually disliked, the last two books. I never found them to be cannon with the rest of the books, and no he doesn't end up with Ginny. Friends yes, lovers no. Little-bast, thanks for the review. To answer some things from your review, everyone will get their just desserts don't worry. About Hagrid, he didn't know that Harry wanted to keep his location a secret, he was never told this. Harry's parents didn't mention Sirius Black because they didn't feel the need to. They did talk about him when James reminisced but nothing further. Their memories are accurate up to before they were murdered, they would have no knowledge of the betrayal. I have something special planned for Harry in year two about his 'emancipation' though I don't know how far I'm going to take it. Thanks to everyone else who reviewed. Also, this is the chapter that many of you have been waiting for. As you probably know by the title of the chapter, we finally get to meet our favorite little bookworm. I played things out a little differently from Leonineus' story in order to explain a few things. Oh, I have also placed some spells in this chapter that I have created myself as well as one's J. created. Which reminds me, I don't own Harry Potter, I only own the things I

create after the fact. This universe is mine (originally Leonineus' I'm just borrowing it).

Vulnera Sanentur: This is not mine, it originally is used to heal Sectumsempra, but I modified it slightly to be able to heal cuts if the caster is strong enough.

Ossa Sanentur: This is one of mine as a variation of the first. Ossa, from the latin Osis, meaning bone. This is used to mend minor broken bones, not major ones. Sanentur, meaning to be healed.

Macula Irae: This is one of mine, it is the spell Harry uses to brand the boys in this chapter. Macula, meaning blemish, and Irae, meaning of wrath, together it's literally blemish of wrath or hate tattoo.

I think that's it. I'll define my spells and possible normal spells in the beginning of the chapter. If you don't like my large openings let me know and I'll try to cut them short, but I do like to answer questions, I have an inner Hermione. Read on.

July was winding down to a close when Harry received some interesting news. He was heading up to his room after his morning run when Annette stopped him. He turned around and headed towards the bar. Annette gestured to an envelope that was lying on the bar table. Harry, curious, walked over and read the front of the envelope. His eyes lit up when he finished.

Harry Potter,

Room 3 of The Leaky Cauldron

Deputy Headmistress Minerva McGonagall

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

"My letter finally came?"

"It looks like it." Annette smiled as she continued to clean some mugs the muggle way.

"Thanks for letting me know Aunt Annette."

"Just make sure you do your best when you go, and read that letter. It tells you what you need to purchase for your school year."

Harry was halfway up the stairs when he remembered his letter. He was so excited that he forgot it. He summoned Erwydd from his holster and pointed it towards his letter.

"Accio letter." Harry flicked his wand towards the letter, which caused it to fly towards him. He caught the letter with his free hand and replaced Erwydd in his holster. Annette shook her head as Harry raced upstairs. He ran into his room and plopped down on his bed.

"Hedwig look, my letter from Hogwarts finally came."

"Well go on, open it, and read it."

Harry tore open the envelope as Hedwig told him to. He pulled out two sheets of parchment paper. He noticed the same emerald green ink from the face of the envelope. He looked the envelope over once more. He saw that the ink setting that he tore had an image of a lion, snake, eagle, and a badger on it. He placed the envelope back down and opened the letter.

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore (Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorcerer, Chief Warlock, Supreme Mugwump, International Confederation of Wizards)

Dear Mr. Potter,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Please find enclosed a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins September 1st. We await your owl by no later than July 31st.

Yours sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

"July thirty first, we better send your response."

"If you wouldn't mind taking it, I'll get my response ready."

"Who else would you even think of sending?"

"I was just trying to rile you up love." Harry quickly wrote out his acceptance reply and attached the letter to Hedwig's outstretched leg.

"Mr. Potter, flattery..."

"Will get me everywhere, right?" Harry smiled as Hedwig shook her head. He then opened the window and watched her fly out in the distance. He sat there until he could no longer see Hedwig, even with his magnified vision from his contact lenses. Harry smiled contentedly as he walked back downstairs.

"So, what do you need for your first year?" Annette asked from behind the counter.

"For my first year?"

"You did read the second half of the letter didn't you?"

Harry pulled the letter out of his pocket and flipped to the second page. He slowly read the contents aloud so that Annette could hear as well.

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Uniform:

1. Three sets of plain work robes (Black)
2. One plain pointed hat (Black) for daywear.
3. One pair of protective gloves (Dragon hide or similar)
4. One winter cloak (Black, with silver fastenings)

Please note that all pupils' clothing should carry nametags.

Course Books:

All students should have a copy of each of the following:

The Standard Book of Spells (Grade 1) by Miranda Goshawk

A History of Magic by Bathilda Bagshot

Magical Theory by Adalbert Waffling

A Beginners guide to Transfiguration by Emeric Switch

One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi by Phyllida Spore

Magical Drafts and Potions by Arsenius Jigger

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them by Newt Scamander

The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self-Protection by Quentin Trimble

Other Equipment:

One wand

One cauldron (Pewter, Standard Size 2)

One set of glass or crystal phials

One telescope

One set of brass scales

Students may also bring an owl OR a cat OR a toad.

PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT FIRST YEARS ARE NOT ALLOWED THEIR OWN BROOMSTICKS.

"Well then, you need to get started with that list."

"I've already got my wand and my familiar. That takes care of those two, so I just need to pick up the rest."

"Have you put any more thought into what you want the other compartments in your trunk to be?"

"Not really, I was hoping to set them up once I figured out what I might use them for."

"You already have one set up as a library, right?"

"Yeah, that was done a few weeks ago at my party."

"Well, maybe you should set one up for your clothes."

"I'm not going to get a mountain of clothes Aunt Annette."

"I wasn't suggesting that you were, but it wouldn't be a bad idea."

"Maybe your right, at least I have two months to decide."

"You have one month."

"What? One month?"

"Well it's nearly the end of July and school starts on the first of September."

"Bloody hell, your right, I really need to get started."

Harry spent the following weeks collecting the items that he would need to retrofit his trunk into a livable place. He changed the first compartment into a living area. The second compartment housed all of his clothing. The third was his library. The fourth compartment was turned into a training area. The fifth compartment would later be used to practice flying on his broom whenever he wished for it. The sixth compartment was turned into a place of Zen. Harry decided to leave the seventh compartment bare. He couldn't think of anything to use it for now.

Once the task of customizing his trunk had finished Harry headed out the door. He walked briskly towards Flourish and Blotts. He entered the store with a clang from the doors bell. The two owners looked up, and when they saw Harry enter, they smiled. Harry smiled back and walked up to the two men.

"Good evening Mr. Deadman, here for more books I presume."

"You know me all too well Mr. Flourish. I'm also here to pay you for the books you gave me at my party." Mr. Flourish smiled as he accepted the payment from Harry. Harry paid his debt using a small pouch outfitted with a weak bottomless charm filled with the necessary amount of gold.

"Now, which books shall you need this time?"

"Well as I just turned eleven I was thinking of my school books." Harry said this with a smile as he showed the two men his acceptance letter.

"Congratulations dear boy, Hogwarts is a fine place to learn." Mr. Flourish took the letter with a smile.

"One of the best, if I do say so myself." Mr. Blotts looked over Mr. Flourish's shoulder to see the books that Harry would need.

"I just wanted to thank you both one more time for the library addition."

"It was no trouble at all, though we do expect your business to remain with us from now on." Mr. Flourish said this with a wry smile.

"Oh most definitely, in fact I was wondering if there was any way that I could get something like a subscription to your store."

"For what exactly?"

"Well, if you were to get any new books in stock that I don't have. I was wondering if I could purchase them and have you send them my way. Though only if I'm at school or away from Diagon Alley at the time, though."

"I suppose we could fashion something together for our favorite customer."

"Excellent, now about the books on the list. I would much like to get started on them while I still have time."

"It looks like you have a couple of these already but I'll grab the rest for you."

Mr. Blotts rummaged through the shelves for a few minutes before returning with about half the books on the list.

"Those are the ones that I was missing?"

"I'm surprised you didn't already know which books you had."

"I've only had a couple of weeks to read them. I'm not that fast of a reader."

"Well, how many books did you get through?"

"Only a couple of shelves."

"Exactly how many?" The shopkeepers looked at Harry with smiles as Harry shuffled his feet in thought.

"Maybe about thirty, closer to forty."

"That's the spirit lad, just skip to the ones on the list and you'll be ready for anything they throw at you in that school of yours."

"Maybe I should read the other years as well."

"Did you want us to get you those books as well?"

"That would be perfect if you could."

Mr. Blotts laughed as he returned with another pile of books. "That'll be forty seven Galleons, twelve Sickles, and twenty Knuts."

"Here's fifty galleons, keep the change."

Harry took his trunk off his chain and enlarged it. He opened the third compartment and had Mr. Flourish send the books flying towards empty spaces on the shelves. He thanked the both of them before leaving for the other shops in the alley. He would save Madam Malkin's Robes For All Occasions for the few days before school in case he grew in the month between the dates. Once he had purchased the rest of his supplies, he finally found a use for the

seventh compartment. He had Phil equip his seventh compartment with seven sets of storage units. He began to fill the first with his first year's supplies and made notes of the books for the seven years in all of the sections.

Once his trip was completed, Harry settled down into his normal routine. This consisted of working out in the morning before dawn. For the rest of the day he would read his books and practice spell work until dusk. From then he would talk to Hedwig and his parents about how his day was and what he was expecting from Hogwarts. He naturally included Annette and Tom, his new aunt and uncle, in these conversations. Harry's parents were glad that Annette and Tom took Harry in. Soon July turned to August, which slowly crawled to an end. It was September first, when Harry decided it was finally time to gather his robes for his journey to school.

Harry woke up very early that morning. He did this so that he would have enough time to get his robes before returning to the Leaky Cauldron for breakfast. Afterwards he was to leave for the Hogwarts Express. When Harry dressed for the day, which included his full set of basilisk clothing and dragon hide cloak, he decided that he was finally ready to proceed into Diagon Alley without the aid of his glamour charms. When he reached the bottom of the stairs, the normal amount of heads turned to see the newcomer in the bar. Instead of turning back, the morning crowd dropped what they were doing and clamored around Harry.

Harry was expecting something to happen when they caught sight of his scar, but this was ridiculous. People were lining up to shake his hand, or even just to talk to him. Harry felt like a celebrity at Hollywood with all the people surrounding him. He laughed to himself as he remembered that he was somewhat of a celebrity. Though he was slightly annoyed by the mob, he didn't make a terrible scene of it.

"Doris Crockford, so wonderful to finally meet you."

"The name's Dedalus Diggle, it's an honor."

Harry was subjected to this for about five minutes before Annette walked over and shooed them off. Harry smiled his thanks to his aunt as he left the bar. He walked quickly through the alley with his hood up careful not to look at anyone. He noticed a few heads turn

his way through his peripheral vision. The people craned their heads to see if they could get a better view but Harry was already far gone from their vision. Harry turned towards Madam Malkin's shop and reached for the handle. Before he could open it, the door was pulled from the other side by a small, thin boy with slicked blond hair.

"Stupid people don't even know how to get my measurements correct." The boy bumped past Harry without as much as a backward glance.

Harry turned around and summoned his wand from his holster. He cast a minor tripping jinx causing the boy to fall into a pile of dragon dung. Before the boy could recover and look back, Harry walked quickly into the store. Harry saw that the store looked as if a tornado recently blew through. He saw the owner desperately trying to lift a rack of heavy cloaks off her assistant.

"Stupid boy thinks he owns the entire world. Honestly if I could I would have hexed that boy."

"Don't worry I did that for you. I made him fall into a pile of dragon dung. Do you need a hand?"

"Yes please, I can't lift this by myself and I'm afraid my assistant may have broken something."

"Honestly it's not that bad, though I do want a breath of fresh air." Harry heard the assistant call from under the cloaks.

Harry smiled as he walked over and lifted the heavy rack off the assistant with one arm. He stood the rack upright before looking around at the rest of the store. It would take a while but he didn't appreciate other people destroying things that aren't theirs.

"Let's get this place cleaned up, shall we?" Harry ran his hand through his hair to wipe the slight dampness of sweat from his forehead. He regretted it almost as soon as he did it. He saw the two witches in front of him gasp as they saw the scar on his forehead.

"You're Harry Potter aren't you?"

"Yeah, but I don't like to make a big deal out of it. I don't even remember what happened. However, I do know that your store is in desperate need of cleaning. Shall we get to it then?"

The two owners nodded and proceeded to tidy up the store with Harry's help. It nearly took two hours but the store was finally in working order. Afterwards, Harry had himself fitted for new robes and left the store with a smile and a wave after paying for a few sets of robes.

Harry spent the rest of the morning with Annette and Tom eating breakfast. He told them about the boy he met, then what he did to Madam Malkin's shop. They were proud for him standing up for himself after he told them what he did to the boy. The part about the dragon dung made them laugh for a few minutes before continuing their breakfast. When Harry finished eating he looked up at the clock, it was nearing nine o'clock.

"Is that the time? I had better get going if I don't want to be late."

"Harry you still have two hours before the train leaves."

"I want to get an empty compartment near the back so that I don't have to deal with people ogling my scar."

"Alright then, do you have everything?"

"I've got my armor, my sword, my wand, my dagger, and my cloak. I'll be carrying Erwydd as a staff for the time being and Hedwig should be around here somewhere."

"Do you have your trunk full of your things?"

"Yeah it's hanging on this chain along with the key."

"Well then good luck, and do your best." Annette bent down and gave Harry a nice big hug. When she finished she gave him a quick kiss on his forehead.

"Try not to get into too much trouble while your there." Tom merely ruffled Harry's already messy hair.

"I will, thanks again for everything."

"Hurry along now."

Harry emerged from the secret entrance to platform nine and three quarters at Charing Cross Station soon after he left the bar. He asked his familiar to find him an empty compartment and wait for him there. Hedwig nodded then flew away towards the train. Harry then took in the sights of platform nine and three quarters. He stood in awe as he gazed upon the scarlet steam engine that would soon transport him to Hogwarts. He looked around and saw a wide variety of students and their families. He saw a boy with black dreadlocks holding a box that had something with a long hairy leg in it. Then he saw a large group of redheads, obviously from the same family. The mother was busy trying to clean the youngest boy's nose with a small handkerchief. Harry was about to walk forward when someone bumped into him. He looked down and saw a small girl with similar red hair rubbing her nose as she sat on the ground.

"Sorry about that, I wasn't looking where I was going."

"Neither was I, I should be the one to apologize."

Harry offered the small girl a hand to get up. When she saw who he was, she gave a small squeal and ran back to her family. Harry stood there with a confused look on his face. He pulled back his hood and rubbed a hand through his hair with a sigh. He barely heard the girl talking to her mother.

"Mom, it's true, I really did see him. He's right there, it's Harry Potter."

Harry saw six heads immediately whip towards him. The oldest son strutted over as if he owned the station. Harry scowled slightly as the boy extended a hand.

"Good day Mr. Potter, my name is Percival Weasley. You'd be sure to remember that name when I become the next Minister of Magic, only if Cornelius Fudge retires of course."

Harry begrudgingly shook the boy's hand. He made his point of disliking him by squeezing a little hard during the shake. Percy withdrew his hand immediately and stretched it out a little bit, as if he was trying to stretch away the pain.

"Sorry about that, I guess I don't know my own strength. The pain should go away in a little bit, I didn't squeeze too hard." Percy nodded curtly as he slinked back to his mother.

Next up was a pair of twins. He smiled as he saw the carefree looks in their faces. He saw a devilish brilliance behind their eyes but not a willingness to flaunt it.

"Hello there Harry, my names Fred and this here's George."

"I thought I was Fred and you were George."

"Well we can't both be Fred and George."

"Then how will we know who's who?"

"Let's ask Harry here to decide."

"Good idea my mirror like friend," The two boys looked towards Harry expectantly.

Harry merely extended his hand with a smile. "Hello there Gred, Forge."

The twins looked back towards one another.

"Brilliant, simply brilliant."

"Couldn't have said it better myself."

The two boys shook Harry's hand with a promise to go easy on him with pranks during his first year. Harry laughed and nodded as the two boys left to join their mother. The youngest brother looked slightly angry and didn't even walk over to him. The little girl blushed and hid behind her mother when Harry smiled at her. Harry laughed silently to himself as he watched the family of redheads walk off towards the train.

At that very moment, a young girl with long, bushy brown hair had walked through the gate to platform nine and three quarters. She was accompanied by her two parents, obviously muggle by the way they dressed. She was holding her mother's hand as her father

pulled the trolley with her trunk on it. She was staring, with a wide grin, at everything as they walked by. She couldn't conceal her excitement.

Her father and mother looked very ordinary when compared to the wizards and witches on the platform. Her father was wearing a blue sweater with a brown sweater vest over it. He had a red tie and black slacks. His wife was wearing a pink blouse with a brown knee length skirt. Both were wearing small gold glasses. Her father had short black hair, while her mother had shoulder length brown hair. When they reached the train they both knelt down and gave their daughter one last hug before they had to leave.

"Oh sweetie, we're so sorry that we have to leave without seeing you off."

"It's okay mum, I know how busy you and dad are."

"Don't think this means we don't want you to write us though."

"Of course not daddy, I'll be sure to send you letters as often as I can."

"One more thing dear, and this is very important."

The brown haired girl looked puzzled as she stared at her parents.

"Do try to make friends at this school. We know how important it is to study, but it is also important to make friends too."

"I know mum, I'll make loads of friends, I promise." The girl hugged her parents one last time before she took her trolley from her dad. "Bye mum, bye dad."

"Goodbye sweetie, study hard and make the top score."

"Goodbye Hermione, make sure you make all the boys swoon over you." Hermione's father earned a glare from both the women of his family for this comment.

Though Hermione was embarrassed by her father's last comment she smiled as she waved goodbye to them. She took a deep breath then turned towards the train. She walked towards the door when

she noticed something out of the corner of her eye. She looked over to see a boy, with a staff and black hair, staring at her from across the platform. She couldn't help but think that she had seen this boy before. She was about to go over to him when she realized that she was still carrying her large trunk. She decided to put her things away before investigating the boy.

She pulled her trolley over to the stairs leading into the train car when she noticed something. The steps were rather high, and her trunk was rather heavy. She tried to lift the trunk herself for a few minutes before she gave up. She was beginning to wish that her father were here to help her with her trunk. She realized that she was already missing her parents. She was about to turn and ask one of the train hands for help when she saw that none were around. How can a train this large be run with no train hands?

"Look what we have here, an ickle firstie with no one to help her with her things."

"Yeah firstie, where're your parents?"

Hermione turned around to see a group of five older boys flanking her. "If you must know, they're dentists and had to return to their practice as they are very busy."

"Well what do you know, we have ourselves a mudblood firstie to boot."

"Shall we teach her how she should act in front of her superiors?"

"I think we shall."

The boys then proceeded to beat the little girl to the ground. Hermione quickly curled up into a fetal position, to try to guard against the beating. Two of the boys opened her trunk and started to rip her books to shreds. She lay there crying from the pain hoping beyond hope that someone would come to her rescue. Her prayers were soon answered.

Minutes earlier, Harry started to head towards the train when he felt something stir in his gut. He turned to his right to see a brown haired girl walk towards the train with her parent. He suddenly thought of the dream he had been having for countless nights. This girl had to

be the brunette from his dreams. There was no mistaking it. He watched her as her parents hugged her and then left. He then noticed her look over at him but he couldn't look away. Then he saw the five boys walk up to her and proceed to berate and assault her.

"Hey, leave her alone!" Harry found himself shouting while running over to the altercation. He was surprised that no one seemed to either notice or bother to stop the group from beating a helpless girl.

"Oh yeah, and what are you going to do about it? Wave your little stick at us maybe?"

Hermione weakly looked up at her savior to see that it was the boy she had seen before. She thought of a dream that she had been having recently, a dream of flying through the clouds next to this boy. Her head fell back to the stone floor as her strength left her body.

"I'll do more than 'wave my little stick' around."

"What can one little firstie like yourself, do against five fifth years?"

"I can kick all of your ruddy asses for starters!"

Harry shrunk his staff to wand size while simultaneously placing it in its holster. He then jumped towards the boy in the center with a knee outstretched. His knee made solid contact with the boy's chin causing a tooth to fall to the ground. The other four stared in disbelief at their so-called leader. Harry then did a sweeping kick causing the two closest underlings to fall to the ground. The remaining two finally came to their senses and rushed Harry. Harry stepped back and let the two boys ram their heads into each other. He then pulled out his wand and performed a small hex that he invented.

"Macula Irae," Harry jabbed his wand towards the boys causing the word 'BIGOT' to tattoo themselves onto their foreheads.

The boys quickly got up and ran to their respective parents. Harry laughed, as he knew that the tattoos had no way of being removed. They would remain that way for the rest of their lives. With the threat of the boys gone Harry turned his attention to the girl he had just saved. She was bleeding pretty badly and he was sure she had broken bones.

"Please don't take this the wrong way, but I have to check if you have broken bones." Harry said this as softly as he could to reassure her safety.

Harry then gently pressed his hand against her arms, legs, and then chest. He found that she had numerous broken bones. He wouldn't be able to help her so he flicked his wand, causing her things to fly back into her trunk. Afterwards he shrunk the trunk down and placed it in his pocket. He then lifted the girl into his arms and walked onto the train. The girl grabbed onto Harry's shirt as hard as she could and began to sob into his chest. Harry walked to the very back of the train and placed Hermione, as gently as he could, onto a seat in the last compartment.

"Just relax, the bad men are gone and can't hurt you anymore. I'm going to make the pain go away now, okay?" Harry was relieved when he saw her slowly nod her head.

Harry pulled his trunk off his silver necklace and placed it on the ground. "Engorgio," the trunk expanded to its normal size. Harry then pulled out his key and opened the seventh compartment. "Accio Delinium," once said, a small vial containing a translucent blue liquid flew from the trunk into Harry's hand.

"Here drink this. It will make the pain go away."

Harry uncorked the vial. He then gently lifted Hermione's head and slowly poured the contents into her mouth. She slowly swallowed the blue liquid. Harry breathed another sigh of relief as the pained look disappeared from Hermione's face. Harry then proceeded to heal her wounds.

"Even with the potion, this might hurt a little bit."

Harry slowly slid his wand over Hermione's wounds. As he did this, he chanted one phrase repeatedly, "Vulnera Sanentur." He smiled as he saw the visible cuts start to mend themselves. Once finished he started to chant another spell as he slid his wand over Hermione, "Ossa Sanentur." Harry moved his right hand behind his wand, making a mental note of the bones that were and were not healing. He was thankful that the breaks were minor and he could heal them all. Once he was finished, all that remained was a small girl with torn

clothing and a trunk full of ruined belongings. Harry fixed this with a quick "Reparo." Harry smiled as he saw Hermione open her eyes.

"How are you feeling?" Before he could get an answer, Hermione threw her arms around him. "I take that as a good sign."

Hermione made a small squeak noise as she pulled away from Harry, "Sorry."

"It's quite alright, you were obviously scared."

"How come no one came to help me other than you?"

"I don't know, but I'm going to have a stern talking to the headmaster about it."

"You don't need to do that."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, besides I'm used to that."

"You're used to people nearly killing you?"

"Well no not that, just the negative attitude."

"Well now, I'll have to fix that."

Harry sat down next to Hermione and placed his arm around her shoulders. Hermione blushed as Harry pulled her close in a one-arm hug.

"What are you doing?"

"This is a testament to our new found friendship. Let it be known that we will never separate."

"Are you totally serious right now?"

"Do you not want to be friends?"

"Well I would like to be friends. Though, you are acting a little weird about it."

"Fine then," Harry pulled his arm away from Hermione and stood up in front of her with a hand outstretched. "How about we just shake on it then?"

"I guess so," Hermione tentatively reached out her hand and shook Harry's hand. She couldn't help but smile when she saw Harry smile.

"There, now we are friends."

"You're very weird. You know that right?"

"I like to call it, adventurous with a hint of outgoing."

"You know, I don't even know your name."

"I don't know your name either."

"My name is Hermione, Hermione Granger."

"I'm Harry Potter."

"You mean Harry Potter, as in the Harry Potter."

Harry pulled aside his bangs to reveal his lightning bolt scar. "Yeah, but I don't like being famous for something I don't remember doing. Besides, have you heard of the things those Harry Potter groupies do?"

"No, what do they do?"

"I don't know. That's why I asked you."

They both laughed as Harry set Hermione's trunk on the ground. "Engorgio," Hermione's eyes went wide when he did this.

"That's a fourth year spell."

"Yeah I know, it's just something I picked up because it was useful. I fixed all of your things by the way." Harry then hefted Hermione's trunk onto the railing above her seat.

"Thank you."

"Don't mention it, it was the least I could do." Harry then pulled his trunk over and closed the lid after Hermione snuck a glance at the contents. He then reinserted the key into the third lock and opened the lid once more. Hermione snuck another glance, this time noticing the large library inside the small trunk.

"Wow, what charms are on that trunk?"

"Let's see," Harry held his hand to his chin in thought. "There is a space altering spell, which allows me to change which area I open depending on which lock I put this key into. Then there are three very nice charms on it. They allow me to do so much with it. One is a bottomless charm. It allows the compartment to be as big as I want it to be. The second is a feather light charm. This allows it to weigh about as much as a small stone. The last is a cleanliness and order charm. It keeps everything tidy, and in order, if I were to tip it upside down."

"That's amazing."

"Want something to read? I think this train ride is supposed to last all the way until nightfall."

"What books do you have?"

Harry pulled out a copy of The Standard Book of Spells, Grade One. "Just ask for one and I either have it, or I can get it."

"You're already reading the course spell book?"

"Rereading it is more like it. It doesn't hurt to be prepared. I've actually read all of them at least once."

"I thought I was the only one who read the school books. Do you perchance have another copy of it?" Hermione didn't want to bother Harry into getting her copy of the book.

"No, but we can read it together if you want."

Hermione blushed then slowly nodded her head. Harry smiled and sat down next to Hermione. Hermione was thrilled that she finally found a friend that shared her interest in learning. She felt that she

could finally go to school without feeling alone in a sea of students. She leaned her head over and read the book with Harry. Harry smiled as he saw Hermione glance up at him every now and then indicating that she had already finished the page. The wait for the train to start was absent from both of their minds.

(A/N) Pretty exciting stuff eh? Harry comes to Hermione's rescue and beat the crap out of those idiot boys. Friendship ensues as well as comedy. I hope to play Harry off as a character with both a serious side and a comedic side. But we have finally seen our little brunette and all her glory. -squeals with delight- ... okay I didn't actually squeal but I thought about it, honestly. Read and Review, and as always, good morning good evening and good night. This is Kunaiswarm, signing off. Ciao.

(A/N): Not too many questions this time around. I'm hoping that's a good thing. Most of what I read in reviews were concerns and not questions so I shall answer them post haste. Topdog19, thanks for the review. No Hermione won't be the perpetual damsel in distress. The only reason why she got jumped was because of two things. One, she wasn't expecting it, and two, she doesn't know that many spells yet. Harry will be there for her in another way, trust me. Umm, I should elaborate on the last sentence, he will help her with magic and such. This isn't going to become rated M, possible ever. If anything, things might be implied. There is a time and place for the bumpty humpty, and now's not the time. Dan, thanks for the review. The reason why no one came to help Hermione and the event of Hermione asking about the potion comes up in this chapter. The Dain, Thanks for the review. Yes it does seem a little bit over the top but in the original chapter for Leonineus' story, Harry actually grabs Malfoy and throws him into some trash cans in an alley. I felt this was a little bit more held back. He doesn't necessarily brag about it, he just let's the shop keep know that her problem was taken care of. BlueMizuki, thanks for the review. Most of the shops do not have assistants or other employees. I have mentioned two that... well one that does, the second comes near the end of this chapter. The reason being, most of the shops are family owned or run by partners. Fred and George ran their shop together with only Lee Jordan helping I believe, I could be wrong. Also as I've said, the reason for no one helping Hermione is explained in this chapter. His hex is more of a curse but still classified as a hex. It's powerful enough to be extremely difficult to remove. It might come off but I probably won't ever mention those boys again, they are just filler. Now, the fight scene. If you look at it carefully Harry used momentum and gravity more than brute strength in the fight. He threw his entire body at the first person rather than a single extremity. He then trip two of them using gravity as the overall force. The last, well he just moved and let them hit each other. That's why Harry was able to beat up those five kids so easily, because he knew how to fight rather than knowing how overpower. Also, he knew how to act with Goblins because Tom had explained a bit of things to him while he was living with them. Now if I lived near a bank full of mean, nasty goblins, I would want to know how to act around them so I didn't get my hands chopped off. Now Nyeste brought up a few good questions in a pm. I answered them, but I feel it would be a good thing to post some of the answers here as well. I think someone wondered where the dragon dung came from, no they don't have a dragon. C'mon it's a place to shop, Professor Sprout says, though I

could be wrong, that dragon dung is excellent fertilizer, hence the cart of it. If you are confused as to how Harry created an advanced spell, that is explained in the chapter.

Now a couple of things that I want to bring up. I feel the need to explain that Tom isn't the hunched back guy from the movie. He looks more like a younger version of Olivander. I didn't want Hermione to get beaten up in that last chapter, it was originally in Leonineus' story, I thought it was a good way for Harry to meet Hermione and have them instantly become friends. It was either that or "OMG Harry you read a lot too let's be friends." Done way too often. This chapter talks about a touchy subject. Now I want to let you all know this before you continue. I do not hate gay people. I have friends who are lesbians, gay, or bisexual. I hold no animosity towards the subject, but sadly some people do. It was a good way to touch a nerve for Draco. Other than that, read review. Oh yeah, I don't own Harry Potter, the one and only J. does. Most of this story's credit goes to her and Leonineus. There are about 4 more chapters until it's completely my story and it will no longer be a rewrite. He did give me notes on the later years, I will use most of them. Anyways enough of my ranting. On with the story.

Eleven o'clock finally came causing the train to jut forward. The sudden lurch caused Hermione to topple into Harry. Hermione blushed as they shared a laugh. Harry stole a quick glance out the window to see the families of the students waving goodbye for the year. Harry's eyes unfocused as a slight smile pulled at the side of his mouth. Hermione saw this and tugged on Harry's cloak. Harry looked over to see that Hermione looked concerned. Harry opted to answer her silent question.

"It's alright, I just kind of wish that my mum and dad were here to see me off."

"I wish mine were here too. I know they're busy, but it would have been nice."

Harry slowly nodded his head. Hermione looked over and quickly realized what she had said.

"Oh Harry I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to say..." Harry cut her off by holding up his hand.

"Hermione, its fine, let's just enjoy the train ride while we can."
Hermione nodded as she sat back up in her seat.

"Harry, can I ask you a question?"

"Sure, what's on your mind?"

"Um, back in the station, with those boys," She started to play with the hem of her robe.

"Hermione, they're gone now. There's nothing to worry about."

"No, it wasn't really about that. Before they ran away, I saw something on their foreheads."

"Oh, that? That was a little spell I invented using an Arithmancy book I bought a while back."

"How can you do all those things? They are all high level spells. Then there were the cuts and the broken bones."

"It's hard for me to perform those spells. Lucky for me, I have a large amount of magic in me."

"So, the only reason you can do those spells is because of your magical reserves?"

"Mostly, and I practiced them a bit."

"What about that potion you gave me? What was it called?"

"Delinium, it's a potion that numbs pain. That one is actually a first year potion, nothing to big about it." Harry shrugged his shoulders.

Hermione looked down and started to play with a loose thread. Harry noticed her shiver. He knew it wasn't cold yet so he thought that she was remembering the attack. Harry leaned forward and embraced Hermione in a hug.

"Hermione, don't let anyone bother you. If you let them get to you, they've won. You need to be strong, fight your enemies with the courage of a lion. If you want, I can help you with that."

"I'd like that," Hermione returned the hug.

Harry then let go and pulled away a little bit. "Feel better now?"

"Yeah, thanks Harry. I think that was just what I needed. I don't plan on rolling over the next time."

"That's the spirit." Harry smiled at Hermione. She blushed and returned the smile. However, her smile soon turned to a frown.

"Why didn't anyone help me?"

Harry let out a sigh and scratched his head. "My uncle told me something about that a while back. He said that, a long time ago, there was a lot of animosity between pure bloods and muggle born wizards and witches. Things that you experienced and much worse, were commonplace. It was a dark time, the time of Voldemort. After I ... well, you know, everything quieted down. However, there is a saying that I picked up from a very special book. The sins of our fathers will be passed down from generation to generation. The pureblood parents probably taught their children to hate muggle born children just as much as they did."

"That doesn't explain why no one helped me though." Hermione pressed the issue.

"Well, I heard my aunt say this once. You are only as smart as the group you are in."

"I think I see your point. No one came to help me because they expected someone else to come?"

"Unfortunately, that's the gist of it."

"Someone really needs to change that."

"You're preaching to the choir Hermione."

"How about we do something?"

"We're just kids, what influence do we have?"

"You're the boy who lived. Surely someone will listen to you."

"If you really want to change the world that bad, let's start with baby steps."

"I don't think I follow you."

"Let's see if Hogwarts is as bad as the rest of the world. We'll see how the teachers deal with the issues at hand. If it doesn't meet our liking, then we can do something about Hogwarts first. After that, we can handle the rest."

"Harry," Hermione was looking down once more. "Thank you, for all of that back there."

"You're my friend Hermione. No matter the kind of situation you are in, I will come to help you. Even if that means that the odds are stacked against me." Harry smiled at Hermione. "Now, let's get back to that book. We'll talk more once we get to Hogwarts." Hermione nodded and smiled. They were just about to continue with their book when they heard a knock at the door.

Harry handed Hermione his book as he got up and walked over to the door. He slid it open to find a boy about the same age as him standing in the doorway. The boy looked very healthy, particularly around the middle, though not as bad as his cousin did. He was wearing a striped sweatshirt and black slacks. His hair was just as black and unruly as Harry's was, though it hid no scar.

"Can we help you?"

"Y-Yeah, I've lost my t-toad. Have any of you s-seen him?"

Harry looked back towards Hermione who shook her head. Harry turned back to the boy to see a pained look on his face. "Well I haven't seen him but I know how we can find him."

The boy's face lit up at this, "Really, how?"

"Accio toad," Harry had summoned his wand and flicked it through the air. Seconds later a fist-sized toad flew into the compartment, and right into Harry's hand. "Is this your toad?"

"Trevor!" The boy eagerly took the toad when Harry handed it to him. "Thank you so much. I wouldn't have lost him if I weren't so busy looking for a compartment to stay in. I think this is the only one left that isn't full."

"Did you want to stay with us then?" Hermione called out from her seat.

"I don't want to be a burden."

"The more the merrier, or so they say," Harry smiled as he ushered the boy into their compartment.

"Thank you," the boy took the seat across from Harry and Hermione. "I'm Neville by the way, Neville Longbottom."

"I'm Hermione Granger. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"Harry Potter," said Harry as he was busy pushing his trunk along with Hermione's trunk and Neville's trunk into the upper rack.

"Are you really the Harry Potter?"

"Yeah, but to me it's only a name."

"I bet you get bothered a lot by people."

"A little, but I understand why they do it."

"Still, it must be really annoying to be subjugated to such pressure."

"Subjugated?" Harry gave Neville a sideways glance when he finished with their trunks.

"Sorry, my gram says that I need to act proper when talking to other people."

"Listen Neville, we are kids just like you. You don't need to act any differently than how you would normally act, at least not with us." Hermione nodded in agreement.

"You make a good point."

The three of them spent the next hour or so talking about their lives before their Hogwarts letters came. Harry spent most of the time listening to the others. He didn't particularly want to share anything before the Deadmans came into his life. He was enthralled in how wizards lived their normal lives. He only had a little less than a year's experience in it. The way Neville spoke, it was almost as if everyday was an adventure in his house. He then told them about when he first realized he could do magic.

"My uncle was dangling me out of the second story window when my gram called him. He accidentally let go, they never expected me to bounce all the way into the neighbor's yard."

"That sounds horrible," Hermione looked shocked during the first half of the conversation.

"It's not so bad a story if you really think about it."

"If you say so," Hermione shrugged as she realized that Neville's uncle was just trying to help.

"So what were your first experiences with magic?"

Hermione delved right into her story before Harry could even open his mouth.

"Well I was in the library looking for a good book to read. I finally found one, but it was on the top shelf. I couldn't find anyone to get it for me so I decided to see if I could reach it. I stood on the tips of my toes but I still couldn't reach it. Suddenly the book flew off the shelf and into my hand. I was so startled that I screamed and threw the book to the ground."

"That's amazing, casting a summoning charm without a wand."

Hermione blushed before turning to Harry. "Well, Mr. Suave, what was your first experience?"

Harry thought back to all the times he had used accidental magic. None of them was too pleasant a memory to share. Apparently, he had been thinking for quite a long time, because Hermione poked him gently on his shoulder.

"Hey, Earth to Harry. Why are you spacing out?"

"Oh, just thinking that's all."

"Well come on, tell us about your first time?" Neville was almost on the edge of his seat.

"Well, honestly?" He looked up at the two of his new friends. They nodded their heads with a confused look. Harry took a deep breath as he decided to recount his story. "The first time I had used accidental magic I was being chased by," He decided to leave out the fact that it was Vernon chasing him with a knife. "I was being chased by someone throughout the house. I hid in a closet, but when he opened it, he didn't notice me. He looked right at me and then closed the door. He was so angry that he couldn't find me that he..." Harry stopped suddenly. He almost said how Vernon stabbed the door with the knife that he was wielding. Harry didn't realize that he had clenched his fists at some point during the story.

Harry suddenly felt a warm hand cup around his fist. "Harry, are you okay?"

Harry looked up to see his friends looking very worried, "Sorry, just a bad memory."

"Then tell us a good one instead."

Harry opened his mouth but nothing came out. Harry had no good memories about accidental magic. Every case was used in an attempt to save him from a beating or various other things. He closed his mouth when nothing came to mind and shook his head. "No good memories of accidental magic to talk about." Harry felt Hermione squeeze his hand a little. He smiled at his new friend, "Let's talk about something else."

Neville expertly changed the subject to talk about the wizarding sport known as Quidditch. The conversation lasted long enough for Harry to forget about the past. Harry was thankful that his new friends could take his mind off his past so easily. This time, it was Hermione's turn to listen as the other two talked about Quidditch. Every so often, a subject came up leaving someone out. Muggle related stories left Neville out of the conversation. Conversation

about families left Harry out. Harry then noticed Hermione try to stifle a yawn.

"Did you have a rough night last night Hermione?" Harry asked as he turned his head towards her.

"I didn't sleep too well last night. I was too excited about Hogwarts."

"Well, Neville and I can quiet down a little so that you can get some rest if you'd like." Hermione looked between Harry and Neville whom nodded in agreement to Harry.

"Thank you, I think I shall take a quick nap."

Harry scooted over until he was sitting right against the wall. Hermione lay down on the seat using her arm as a pillow. Harry couldn't help but smile at his friend while she slept. Neville noticed this and quietly got Harry's attention.

"You like her don't you?"

"Me?" Harry looked taken aback for a second. It was true that he held feelings for his friend, but it was only that of friendship. "I like her as a friend. We only met on the train a little while ago when..." Harry stopped mid sentence.

"You don't have to say it if you don't want to."

"Neville, can I ask you a question?"

"Sure, ask me anything."

"Why are people still so close minded in the wizarding world?"

Neville gave a long sigh as his answer. "The truth is, Harry, that most people get their views from their parents. Their parents got it from their parents, and so on."

"That's what I told Hermione. But why does it have to be that way?"

"No one has bothered to change it. I take it she was the victim of the attack I saw just before getting on the train."

"Yeah, those assholes cornered her." Harry shot a slightly angry look at Neville.

"I would have done something to help but," Neville looked down at Trevor. "I'm not a fighter Harry."

"You can be anything you want to be Neville, remember that. Hermione and I are planning to change things in Hogwarts if it's anything like those boys. You want in?"

Neville opened his mouth to answer but he was interrupted by a boy opening the door to their compartment. This boy had flaming red hair and freckles all over his face. He was wearing a blue and red flannel shirt with blue jeans. He looked over the occupants before entering and closing the door behind him.

"Can we help you?" Harry asked before the boy could make a move towards the seats.

"I was hoping to sit here, everywhere else is full." The redhead didn't even bother to keep his voice down for Hermione. She was fast asleep and breathing softly.

"You can, just keep your voice down. In case you didn't notice, she's asleep." Harry pointed to Hermione.

Ron glanced at Hermione then back to Harry. He shrugged as he walked over to where Hermione was sleeping rather than the empty seat next to Neville. He bent down slowly examining her face. Harry was inches away from pushing the boy away from Hermione. Before he could do anything though, the boy sat down next to Neville. Harry and Neville exchanged curious and angry looks. Neither liked the red haired boy too much.

"My name is Ron Weasley by the way. You've already met my brothers. What are your names?"

"I'm Neville Longbottom."

"I'm Harry Potter."

"So what's it like to have that scar of yours?" Ron actually yelled this causing Hermione to jerk awake.

"Wassat wuh?" Hermione stammered as she took in her surroundings.

"I told you to keep quiet." Harry was beginning to like the boy less and less with each passing moment.

"So what, it's not like I hurt anyone. Besides, now that she's awake she can go find the trolley and get us something to eat."

Hermione looked incredulously at Ron as she got up to stand in front of him. "I will not go find the trolley for you. You can do that on your own. You have two legs don't you. Why don't you get up and use them."

Ron stood up abruptly causing Hermione to fall backwards onto Harry's lap.

"Comfy?" Harry asked behind her bushy hair.

Hermione turned her head and gave a small squeak before she turned her gaze towards Ron. She then gave him a rather steely gaze.

"Don't look at me like that. You're the girl so you should obviously go get us some food." Hermione opened her mouth to speak but Harry stopped her. He softly held on to her arms so that she wouldn't retaliate, inadvertently pulling her closer to him.

"I think you need to leave now." Harry tried to remain calm though his patience was wearing thin.

"Why should I? She's the one who's refusing to do as I say."

"For two reasons I'll explain them slowly for you, just so you'll be able to understand. One, she does not have to do anything that anyone says unless she wants to. Two, you have been nothing but annoying since you opened the door."

"I thought you'd be different. Clearly the fame has gone to your head."

"Really, are you really going to go there? Do you really think that I would rather have my fame than my family?" Harry was almost to the point of yelling as he let go of Hermione. Hermione used this time to return to her seat.

"I bet your parents are glad that they're dead. They don't have to deal with you any more."

Harry snapped, jumped from his seat, and grabbed Ron by the collar. He picked him up off the ground and slammed him against the door causing the glass to break. Harry was red in the face from his anger, while the Weasley boy was turning blue. Harry would have waited until he turned white and limp, if Hermione hadn't stopped him. Hermione placed her hand on Harry's shoulder causing him to drop Ron and turn around.

"Harry don't do it, he isn't worth it, trust me."

Harry calmed down as he turned back to Ron. "Get out right now before you regret it."

"I'm not afraid ... of you ... Potter." Ron was coughing in between his words as he rubbed his throat.

"One," Harry closed his eyes in an attempt to calm himself.

"You couldn't scare a t-toddler," Ron started to stutter as he was soon realizing that he was outnumbered.

"Two," Harry opened his eyes to reveal a fire that few people ever saw.

"Do your w-worst," Ron's face started to go white as he knew he would not win the battle but his stubbornness wouldn't let him back down.

"Three," Harry reached up and began to unsheathe Excalibur. Ron saw this and immediately turned and ran from the compartment. Harry slid his sword back into its holster and turned to his friends. "I think he wet himself."

Harry, Hermione, and Neville burst out laughing as they returned to their previous conversations. Harry took out his wand and repaired

the glass that he had broken. By then the trolley showed up being toted by a short witch. Harry grabbed a little bit of everything for Hermione to taste. She hadn't tried any of the magical treats that Harry and Neville had. They were about to dig in when they were disturbed once more by a boy. Though this one wasn't Ron, Harry gave a sigh.

Harry turned towards the door to see a smug looking boy. He had blonde hair that was slicked back with too much gel. He was already wearing his school robes, which looked brand new. In fact, they looked as if he just recently picked them clean with a magnifying glass and a pair of tweezers. He looked over the three of them with grey calculating eyes. Following close behind him were two larger boys, whom Harry mistook for ogres.

"So it's true then, Harry Potter is in this compartment."

Harry turned his attention back to the sweets and just ignored the boy.

"So what if he is, just leave us alone will you." Hermione glared at the greasy haired boy.

The boy looked at Hermione in disgust as he turned back to Harry. "My name is Malfoy, Draco Malfoy. These two are Crabbe and Goyle." He cocked his head to the two boys behind him.

Harry stood and stared at Draco with a raised eyebrow. "The name's Bond, James Bond." Harry and Hermione shared a laugh when everyone else looked confused.

"But, you're obviously Harry Potter. You have the scar and everything."

"It was only a joke, lighten up."

Draco flashed an angry face before returning to his smug demeanor. "It would be wise of you to befriend the right type of people." He looked disgustingly at Neville and Hermione before he extended a hand for Harry.

"Let me get this straight. You want me to go with you and these strapping young lads behind you. Am I correct?"

"Yes, I'm glad that you see things my way." Draco gave an evil grin as he extended his hand further for Harry to take it.

Harry took Draco's extended hand into both of his. Draco looked confused for a second before Harry shook his head. "Draco, while I'm proud of you for admitting it, I just don't swing that way."

"What are you talking about?" Draco quickly withdrew his hand. Hermione repressed a snicker.

"I respect your sexual preference but I'm more into girls." Harry gave Hermione a sly wink causing her to blush.

"Are you saying that I'm ... gay?" Draco spat out the last word.

"Seriously, someone who spends that much time on their hair and clothes, you either have to be extremely effeminate or flamboyantly gay. Though you don't strike me as the effeminate type."

"But ... I'm not gay."

"Denial isn't just a river in Egypt." Harry clasped his hands over Draco's shoulders.

"I'm not gay!" Draco yelled as he pushed Harry's hands off him.

"You need to come out of the closet one of these days. Just know that I'll be there supporting you when you do."

Draco looked furious. His face was beet red. "I AM NOT GAY!" Draco yelled this as he backed out of Harry's compartment.

This sudden outburst gained the attention of the nearby compartments. People were sticking their heads out to see what was going on. Draco saw this and immediately retreated, followed by his two lackeys. Harry turned back to his friends, unable to contain his laughter any longer. Harry fell down into his seat as Hermione laughed into his shoulder. Neville was holding his sides as he was bent over laughing.

"That was too funny." Neville was the first to be able to string together a coherent sentence.

"I really don't care if he's gay or not but that was hilarious." Hermione finally recovered from her fits of laughter.

"I have a friend who's gay. He lives in Diagon alley and helps at a furniture store. He's a great guy, he tells the funniest stories. He's got this great one about a troll, and ogre, and a giant at a bar."

Harry began to tell his friends the story. He was halfway through the story when they remembered the candy that they had bought. Harry was telling Hermione about all the different kinds of candy that wizards and witches had. Hermione, coming from a family of dentists, opted for the sugar quill.

"Oh come on Hermione, live a little." Harry passed her a chocolate frog.

"What's this?" Hermione eyed the package curiously. "It's not really a frog, is it?"

"Well, it acts like a frog. It's just a piece of charmed chocolate."

Hermione slowly opened the package. Once opened, the frog jumped out and hopped towards the open window. However, before it could escape, Harry grabbed the frog. He offered it to Hermione who politely declined. Harry shrugged his shoulders and bit the frog's head off.

"I think I'll stick to the sugar quills."

"Suit yourself, I'm going to have me some of these."

"Bertie Bots Every Flavor Beans?"

"Yeah, they're the best." Harry popped a red bean in his mouth.

Neville quickly got Hermione's attention and pointed to Harry. Hermione, confused, looked over at Harry to see his faced scrunched up as if he was in pain.

"Harry, what's wrong?"

"Hot, too hot," Harry spat the bean out the open window. "I hate it when that happens, but that's the thrill of not knowing."

"What flavor was that?"

"I don't know, but it was some sort of really spicy pepper I'm guessing."

Neville laughed as he explained for Hermione. "When they say every flavor they mean every flavor. You get the normal ones like cherry, grape, and orange. However, you also get things like grass, trout, and, in Harry's case, pepper."

"I think I'll try the chocolate frogs after all." Hermione opened a chocolate frog and snapped it in half before it could escape. She was willing to try new things but she didn't want to eat something that would move while she swallowed it.

"Don't forget the card." Neville said in between bites from his pumpkin pasty.

Hermione pulled out a small pentagon shaped card. She saw a small picture of Albus Dumbledore. The miniature Dumbledore gave a curt smile before walking off the frame. "He just walked off the frame." Hermione looked up in shock.

"Yeah, they tend to do that." Harry said as he looked over Hermione's shoulder at her card. "Oh, you got Dumbledore." Harry's brow furrowed in irritation.

"Something wrong Harry?" Hermione looked over at Harry.

"I had an unpleasant experience with him."

"You've actually met him?"

"He's made my life a living hell since day one." Hermione opened her mouth to respond but Harry held up a hand. "I'll tell you both about it later. I think we're nearly there."

Harry was right. The train seemed to be slowing down slightly as it coming to a stop. The three of them stood up to get dressed in their school robes. Hermione took hers to the nearby lavatory to change

while the boys stayed in the compartment to change. Harry didn't change into his school clothes. He merely changed his under shirt and pants. Once done, he put his armor back on and fastened his cloak. Hermione returned seconds later. The three sat back down waiting for the train to stop.

"We're almost to Hogsmeade Station. Please leave behind your trunks. They will be brought to your dorms shortly." The three perked their heads up when they heard the announcement.

"Bugger that, I'm not letting them near my trunk."

"It'll be alright, they've never done anything before."

"With the way that some of the students have treated us," Harry looked towards Hermione. "I don't think we should take any chances."

"Harry's right, I don't want some random stranger taking my things anywhere."

Neville looked between his two friends before he nodded his head. "You're probably right. How are going to get our trunks to the school without anyone seeing them?"

"That's easy," Harry pulled out his wand. "Reducio, Accio Trunks," the three trunks shrank to the size of pebbles as they flew to Harry's outstretched hand. Harry attached his to the chain around his neck and gave the other two to their respective owners. Harry laughed as Neville scrutinized his now shrunken trunk.

"C'mon Hedwig, you can't dilly dally all day up there." Harry called to the rack.

Hermione and Neville turned their heads to the rack for the first time that day to see a beautiful pearl white phoenix glide down on top of Harry's head. They both stood their, mouths agape. They both felt a warmth wash over them.

"I didn't mean for you to land on my head." Harry smiled as he brought his free hand up to gently pet his familiar. His left hand was currently occupied with his staff.

"Harry, did you know you have a phoenix?"

Harry looked up as Hedwig tilted her head down. "Yeah I kind of figured that after she turned into one."

"Wait, she turned into one? What was she before then?"

"She was originally an owl, but when she finally found me she turned into the beauty that you see before you."

"Is she a were-avian or something?"

"Sort of, most phoenixes can't turn back into other birds once they turn for their master. At least that's what I think, but I've never seen a phoenix before this beauty. I don't know if Hedwig won't be able to, she hasn't tried though so I wouldn't know. Oh by the way, Hedwig, these are my friends Hermione Granger and Neville Longbottom."

Harry smiled when their stunned looks turned to shock. "I'm guessing, by that look, that she said hello."

"She can talk?" Neville spoke up first.

"It's more like she sends the message straight to your brain."

"I did read somewhere that phoenixes were thought to be telepathic." Hermione looked thoughtful as she extended a hand towards Hedwig. Hedwig gently nipped it as Hermione stroked her breast feathers.

"Her voice is one thing when she's talking, but you should hear her sing. It's like heavenly bells in your ears." Hedwig plopped on Harry's shoulder and nipped his ear affectionately. "You do know you can talk to all of us at once, not just one at a time love."

"Well then, I thought our conversations would be something you wanted to keep one on one."

"Oh come on don't do that. We can still have our talks."

"You are so easy to tease Mr. Potter."

"Only when you do it love."

Suddenly the train came to a screeching halt.

"Well, I guess it's time to head to school." Harry looked from Neville to Hermione, "Shall we?" He held out his arms for his compatriots.

"I do think we shall." Hermione acted dignified as she took Harry's right arm.

"Yes let us depart." Neville stepped up to Harry's left and placed his hand on his shoulder.

The trio laughed as they exited their compartment for their school year.

(A/N): Goodness. We've come so close to the castle only to have it taken away at the last second, sort of. Next chapter will introduce that famed stone structure. Many things get revealed. Some people will be exposed as something sinister, while others a ray of light. Who will they be? The only way to find out is to tune in to the next exciting episode of Harry Potter HSS.

P.S. Don't flame me about the scene where Harry accuses Draco of being gay. If you do, I just will plain ignore it. I hold nothing against the gay community. In fact, I think they've been repressed for far too long, they need the same rights as we all have. Everyone stand together and reach to the skies, LOVE THY RAINBOW! Don't know where that came from.

P.P.S I've changed a bit of the description for the story to better reflect on what it is.

(A/N): There was actually not a lot of confusion in the past couple of chapters which is cool in my book. But there were a couple of things. Schnookums brought up a good point about Harry's parents in the Pensieve. Don't worry, I have something planned for this, it's in the next chapter at the earliest and chapter 13 at the latest. I'm maybe a third of the way through chapter 11 right now and I already know what I'm going to write for the following chapters all the way up to Halloween which should be on ... maybe chapter 16 or 17 I don't know. Timetables are a bit wonky as of now. First year might have about 30 some odd chapters if all goes right. Now on to another reviewer. Jarno, while I do appreciate the review I will not listen to "It's impossible". Keep in mind that this is a work of fiction, meaning the impossible is going to happen. Besides, you may have all that experience under your belt, but I'm a "Pics or it didn't happen" kind of guy. I don't necessarily think you're lying about your titles, but I can't find proof of the other side of it. Besides, if you caught three people COMPLETELY off guard who had NO fighting experience whatsoever who's strength came from lifting a small ten inch stick all day, I do believe you could beat them hands down. Then the last two, yes that was from old comedy movies. I like the classics and it worked. I'll say it again, I do appreciate the review, but feel that the scene was completely doable. I took the time to talk it over with a bunch of people whom I don't know, I.E. random strangers. They all said that it was quite possible. Maybe difficult, but possible. Other than that, on with the show. Oh and I particularly liked the end of this chapter. As always I don't own anything from the Harry Potter verse, the one and only J. does.

A brisk and clear night greeted the three children as they exited the train. Harry looked around to see that there was a full moon in the sky. Though it was dark, the moonlight and starlight illuminated the station around them. The hustle and bustle of children trying to find their friends in the crowd was starting to make Harry a little jumpy. He was glad when he heard a familiar voice booming over the clamor.

"Firs' years over 'ere, firs' years with me, come on you lot."

"Hello Hagrid, how are you? Did your trip go well?"

"Hullo Harry, the trip was perfect and I'm doin' quite well thank you."

Harry smiled when he saw Hermione and Neville's jaw drop at the sight of Hagrid. He knew that, behind those big muscles and bushy beard were kind eyes. He remembered Hagrid giving away his location to Dumbledore, but he just couldn't find a reason to get angry with him. Hagrid, after all, had been one of his parent's closest friends. Hagrid may have inadvertently betrayed Harry, but it was only because he tended to speak from his heart, not his brain.

"Glad to here it went well. Are we going to Hogwarts by the boats then?"

"Right, follow me and I'll show yeh the boats."

Hagrid made a path through the students after he collected all the first years. He led them down a small stone stairway that turned into a beaten dirt path. Once at the bottom, they came out onto a small jetty. Boats were sloshing slightly in the ripples of the lake.

"Alright, in the boats yeh go. No more'n four to a boat."

Harry, Hermione, and Neville immediately took the boat nearest to them. They saw Ron coming up to their boat. Harry wasn't sure if he wanted to start something else up or wanted to apologize. He didn't rightly care what the boy did, so long as it was far away from him. He was glad when another boy filled the remaining seat in the boat. The boy had dark skin. Harry couldn't tell if it was a tan or natural. He had short black hair and stern eyes.

"Do you mind if I sit here?"

"Please do," Harry nodded his head nonchalantly.

"My name is Blaise Zabini by the way."

"This is Hermione Granger," Hermione waved. "This is Neville Longbottom," Neville shook Blaise's hand, "And I'm Harry Potter." Harry extended his hand.

"You mean the Harry Potter." Harry rolled his eyes. This was starting to get annoying.

"Yes I'm that Harry Potter." Harry withdrew his hand slightly.

"Want to be friends then?" The boy smiled at the three of them.

"That would be great." Harry reached forward and grasped the boy's outstretched hand.

Once everyone was situated in the boats, Hagrid commanded them forward with a wave of his hand. The ride was slow and, thanks to the size of the lake, would take awhile. This gave Harry enough time to get to know Blaise. It turns out that Blaise was part of a pureblood family. He didn't really like the views expressed towards muggle born witches and Wizards. As far as his family was concerned, they were just another potential client in their business. The Zabini business catered to those that wished to have non-magical items charmed to be magical. There were laws against ordinary muggle devices, so they could only operate with magic related items. Harry then noticed Hermione shivering next to him.

"I guess I should have put my heavy cloak on over my light cloak."

"A little chilly there?"

"Yeah," Hermione tried to breathe hot air into her hands to warm up.

"Here," Harry pulled out one side of his cloak and drew Hermione close to him.

Hermione smiled up at Harry, thankful for the extra warmth. She rested her head on Harry's shoulder, eager to get the sleep that she had missed on the train. Her eyes fell shut and she fell asleep almost instantly. She was having a weird dream. She was flying through the air on a broom. She turned to her left and saw Harry flying next to her, above her flew Hedwig. She couldn't recognize the other three girls that were flying with them. She wished for the dream to continue but a loud voice woke her up from her sleep.

"Alrigh' you lot, once we turn this corner 'ere, you'll be able ter see your first glimpse o' Hogwarts Castle." Hagrid said over his shoulder.

"How long was I asleep?"

"Only about five minutes," Harry smiled down towards Hermione who was resting her head on his shoulder.

"How long does this boat ride take?" Neville asked from behind the two of them.

"It takes about ten or so minutes. Sometimes, it can take up to twenty minutes if the boats are going slower. They normally do that to increase the dramatics of the castle and the scenery." Harry seemed to be reciting this out of a book.

"Hogwarts, a History?" Hermione asked from Harry's side.

"Maybe," Harry gave Hermione a sly grin as they turned the corner.

They were torn from each other's gaze by the sudden clamor coming from the students. They turned their gazes towards the front to see Hogwarts castle looming over them. The stunning sight, sitting against the blackened sky, was remarkable. Harry had never seen anything like he. He had dreamed of running away to a castle like this once upon a time, but he never thought something like this existed. That was until a year ago when he met the Deadmans.

"Alrigh' watch yourselves now. There's a wall o' ivy up ahead, duck your heads."

Harry looked forward to see if he could spot the wall. All he could see was the wall of rock they were heading for. He looked around and saw the surprise from the other students. They all thought they were going to crash. Harry figured the wall was an illusion and waited for Hagrid's boat to disappear through it. Sure enough, seconds later Hagrid's boat vanished. Harry heard a few people breath a sigh of relief when they saw this.

Once the boats passed through the fake wall, they found themselves in a dimly lit cave. There were torches lining the walls as condensation steadily dripped from the ceiling. The students had to dip their heads as they drifted under a small wall of ivy. Their boats came to a slow halt next to a rocky pier. Once they stepped out, they were herded together by Hagrid. He looked the students over as if to make sure they were all there, then turned and stretched his arm forward. The students had to jog a little bit in order to keep up with the giant's strides.

"We'll be getting to the Great Hall soon. Once we do get there, you're to wait there for Professor McGonagall to come get yeh."

Sure enough, not a minute later they made it to a pair of great oaken doors. "Wait here and don't try nothin'." Hagrid then disappeared through the doors. As soon as the doors closed, a familiar greasy haired boy walked in front of Harry.

"I think we got off on the wrong foot Mr. Potter."

"I'm not quite old enough to be called Mr. just yet."

Malfoy rolled his eyes, before he continued, "I can still show you who the right crowd is."

Harry looked at Hermione on his right and Neville on his left. "I'm in a pretty good crowd as it is. You should probably head on back to your boyfriends. They're probably missing you by now."

"I told you I'm not gay!" The effect of the yell was lost when Draco's voice cracked halfway through it.

"Honestly, it's not a bad thing." Harry shook his head.

Malfoy's face was now as red as Ron's hair as he stomped back to his minions. Draco turned around to throw another insult at Harry when pearlescent figures swept the before the group. Draco's shriek alerted the ghosts to the student's presence. Harry nudged Hermione and Neville and pointed towards Draco. While everyone was now looking at the ghosts, Draco had leapt into Goyle's arms in fright. The group shared a laugh as one of the ghosts flew towards them.

"Ah, fresh students I see." The ghost was wearing something similar to regal attire with a scruff around his neck. He had a wide mustache and curled gray hair.

"Yeah, we're waiting for Professor McGonagall to come and get us." Harry stepped forward towards the ghost.

"Ah, yes. That would explain why you are all waiting out here."

"By the way, what's your name?"

"My name is Sir Nicholas De Mimsy-Porpington." The ghost did a flourished bow. "I am one of the ghosts for the house of Gryffindor. I

do hope to see some of you sorted into my house." Sir Nicholas then turned to head into the Great Hall before Ron piped up.

"Hey, aren't you Nearly Headless Nick?" Sir Nicholas flinched at his nickname.

"Nearly headless, how can you be nearly headless?" Hermione's curiosity got the better of her.

Sir Nicholas sighed as he floated back towards the group. "Like this," He then took hold of a tuft of hair and pulled his head to the side. Everyone jumped back a step save for a few people, Harry and Hermione. The pull made a sickening pop when Nick tugged on his head. He then let it hang there from the small amount of skin and muscle tissue that was left. After satisfied that everyone had seen, he made a jerking motion causing his head to flip back into place. The act sounded as if two pieces of fresh meat were being slapped together.

"Now if you'll excuse me, I do want to join the feast." No one stopped him as he floated through the door.

Harry returned to Hermione's side and stole a glance at her. She looked a little sheepish at asking a question that Nick obviously didn't like being asked. Before Harry could say anything to encourage his friend for her boldness, he was interrupted by the sound of the large oak doors opening. Out stepped a rather tall witch.

This witch had a stare that could silence a room with but a glance. She was wearing emerald green robes with a matching witch's hat. She had auburn hair, which was tied up in a bun. The energy that she emitted through her stare didn't betray the age that she looked. She held a wand in one hand and a small roll of parchment in the other. She surveyed the students in front of her when her eyes caught sight of Harry. She paused for a fraction of a second. Harry barely caught the small smile that McGonagall gave him. She then looked at the majority of the group before she addressed them.

"Good evening, my name is Professor McGonagall. I am the Deputy Headmistress here at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. I am also the Gryffindor's Head of House. There are four of these houses, Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin." She said the last house with a hint of distaste. "In a moment, you will enter the

Great Hall and be sorted into your house. For the duration of your stay, your house will be something like that of a family. You will sleep together, attend classes together, and eat together."

The group looked around at their new and old friends, hoping that they would be sorted together. McGonagall cleared her throat to get their attention back.

"Every year, a house is awarded the House Cup. The house with the highest points wins. Good deeds and correct answers will award you with points." She then paused over Malfoy, "Any rule breaking will lose you house points. Now without further..." She was interrupted by a loud croak. Everyone looked down at the spot in front of McGonagall and saw a large toad sitting there. McGonagall looked slightly appalled when she saw the toad, but changed her demeanor when she realized that the toad belonged to one of the children.

"Trevor," Neville yelled as he bolted forward and scooped up his pet. He then looked up at McGonagall and hesitantly backed up into the group.

"As I was saying," She cleared her throat once more. "Without further delay, I want you all to line up into three lines and follow me into the Great Hall. Remember you are now representing Hogwarts. That means you need to be on your best behavior." The children nodded as they formed the three lines.

Neville stood to Harry's left, while Hermione stood to Harry's right. The group of children then followed Professor McGonagall into the Great Hall. As soon as the group of first years entered the hall, they were greeted to the stares of their older classmates. All of the first years were eager to be sorted into their houses to ease their trepidation. The older students stared at the younger students out of curiosity, not animosity. They too were eager to see where the new students would be sorted.

No sounds were heard in the great hall, save for the tap tapping of Harry's staff. Harry's face was obscured from view by his upturned hood, so he had free view of everyone else but not visa versa. Hedwig had decided to use his head as her perch while she waited for her master to be sorted into a house. He heard whispers from the second years and higher, all directed towards him.

"Who's that boy in the middle wearing the cloak?"

"Why is he carrying a staff? That can't be his wand, can it?"

"Why does he have a phoenix? I heard those are hard to get."

"I wish I could see his face."

Harry smiled at all the questions being thrown in his direction. Harry heard a few questions coming from the first years surrounding him as well. Most were looking up towards the ceiling exclaiming their awe in their clear view of the night sky. He laughed quietly to himself as Hermione explained that it wasn't really the sky, only that the ceiling was enchanted to look like it. He was starting to grow accustomed to his new friend's vast wealth of knowledge. He was abruptly brought out of his thoughts as the group halted near the front of the tables.

Professor McGonagall ordered them to wait there while she went behind the staff table to fetch a stool and an old dusty hat. Harry knew the hat well from his aunt and uncle's stories of their time at Hogwarts. He knew that there was no test, or difficult task, that needed to be accomplished, in order to be sorted into your house. The only test you would have to do was a test of character under the brim of the hat. Professor McGonagall came to a stop in between the first years and the staff table. She set the stool down and rested the hat upon its top.

"This is the Sorting Hat. It will sort you into your respective houses." Then the brim of the hat opened wide and made a cough that sounded like ruffling fabric.

"Thank you Professor, I think I'll take it from here." The Sorting Hat's folds formed a face as its tear formed a mouth. Professor McGonagall nodded her head and stepped aside just as the hat cleared its throat.

From abroad, you are all found

To be sorted into a house, once year round

Through many aspects I may look

For to me, you are like an open book
Place me on your head and you shall see
That nothing in your mind is hidden from me
However, you may think that I don't know
Put me on, I'll tell you where to go
If Gryffindor, is what you seek
Pray not that you are meek
If brave and bold is what you are
In Gryffindor you'll go far
If Ravenclaw, is what you yearn
Be well of mind and thirst to learn
Though knowledgeable and smart
Ravenclaw is kind at heart
If Hufflepuff, is where you want to go
Then loyalty is what should flow
A Hufflepuff is just and true
They will never ever abandon you
Maybe Slytherin is your goal
One as cunning as the whole
They may wish to become great
They should also learn to wait
All four of these houses are pure

Nevertheless, be wary of what you'll endure

To betray those around you

Is the worst thing one can do

No one is quite as forgiving

As those who are living

So take heart and be merry

Put me on and do not worry

I am truly unbiased

This is why I am the wisest

As soon as the Sorting Hat finished its song the whole room erupted in applause, some were even cheering. It only took a few seconds for the sudden noise to die back down. The Sorting Hat bowed, as much as it could, to the students. He then flicked upright and waited for Professor McGonagall to call the students forward. Harry was barely paying attention to the sorting. He was looking across the staff table when he met Dumbledore's eyes. They both looked at each other but neither blinked for what seemed like hours. Harry finally broke free from his staring contest when he heard a name called out.

"Bones, Susan," Harry's head snapped towards the Sorting Hat. He didn't know why, but somehow he knew that name. He then saw the person associated with that name. A short girl with dark red hair nervously stepped forward towards the hat. Harry instantly recognized her as one of the girls from his dream. Her face was nervous but Harry could see the loyalty and kindness behind her eyes. He was just about to walk forward when he thought of something. If she didn't have the same dream then how could he confront her? He decided to hold off until he was approached by her about it.

"Hufflepuff," The hat shouted for the Great Hall. Harry clapped loudly with the rest of the students. He noticed that Slytherin wasn't

clapping unless someone was sorted into his or her house. He saw a timid Slytherin first year sitting next to a group of older Slytherins. He had tried to clap for Susan, but the other Slytherins quickly stymied him.

He wondered just how deep the resentment between houses went. He found out, through careful observation, that the houses only clapped loudly when someone was sorted into their house. They didn't clap as if to greet a fellow student, but more to try to express dominance over the other houses. Harry scanned the staff table to see if the teachers showed the same resentment. None did, save for one. He had greasy black hair and a long hooked nose. He looked as if he could dissolve you with a glance.

"Granger, Hermione," The name brought him once more out of his thoughts.

Hermione looked extremely nervous. She hesitated for a moment until she felt something on her shoulder. She looked over and saw Harry's reassuring smile. She smiled herself as she bravely walked up towards the hat. The hat was placed on her bushy brown hair and sunk to her forehead. She sat there for around half a minute before the Sorting Hat shouted, "Gryffindor!"

Harry clapped loudly along with the rest of Gryffindors. Harry watched as two more students were sorted into Slytherin and Hufflepuff. Then another name was called that caught his attention. "Greengrass, Daphne," Harry looked around to see who was called but saw no one moving. Then he felt someone brush past him and walk up to the stool. She was a little bit taller than Harry was and had long flowing black hair. Her face showed a determination that he had only seen in a few of the students called. The hat needed only ten seconds to make up its decision, "Slytherin!" Harry clapped loudly for Daphne. This caused many people to stare at him. Apparently, the resentment for Slytherin was greater than the resentment for the other houses. This didn't stop Harry though. He knew that he could only talk to her about the dream if she approached him about it.

The next name that was called that Harry paid attention to was Neville's name. He gave him a pat on the back for courage. Neville nodded his head in thanks as he walked up to the stool. He tripped along the way, but that was because Trevor had jumped out of his

pocket and he stepped wrong to avoid crushing him. Once the hat was placed on his head Neville was sorted into, "Gryffindor!" Harry clapped loudly at this. Neville caught Harry's eye and mouthed "Thank you" to him. Harry simply smiled and nodded his head. Harry was looking towards his new friends in Gryffindor when a name was called that everyone was waiting for.

"Potter, Harry," McGonagall looked up from her parchment to search for Harry. "Potter, Harry," She repeated when Harry didn't move from his spot. People were now craning their necks in an attempt at finding Harry Potter in the group of first years. Most of them were looking for the trademarks of his visage, the black hair, green eyes, and most of all, the scar.

"That would be me,"

Harry then stepped forward causing everyone's whispering to die down immediately. The only noise that carried through the hall came from his staff as it hit the stone floor. Dumbledore edged forward in his seat in anticipation. He wondered how his warrior of light was going to fare in the sorting. Harry stopped in front of the stool and flipped his cloak over it so that he could sit down. He then pulled down his hood causing Hedwig to fly up and around to sit in front of an open space on the Gryffindor table right next to Hermione. When Professor McGonagall placed hat on Harry's head it slid down to his nose.

"What's this, am I on someone right now?"

"Sorry about that."

"You have quite the shields there m'boy."

"Did you need me to lower them for you?"

"That would make the reading much easier for us both."

Harry started to lower his shields when he felt a sudden pressure on the back of his head. He quickly stood up and turned towards the staff table, enforcing his shields to their max. This caused the two causing the pressure to stagger ever so slightly.

"Mr. Potter, what seems to be the problem? The Sorting Hat has not called your house just yet."

"Professor McGonagall, can I ask you something?"

"While it is highly unusual for a student that hasn't been sorted to ask a question during his sorting, I shall allow it."

"Is it customary to invade a student's mind while they are here at Hogwarts?"

"Of course not, it's an invasion of their privacy and personal space."

"Then why are Headmaster Dumbledore and this man, whom I now recognize as Severus Snivellus Snape, attempting to invade my mind."

Professor McGonagall looked appalled as she looked towards the staff table. She recognized the symptoms of someone recovering from a Legilimency backlash.

"Professor Snape, Headmaster, I'm extremely displeased at the lack of respect you both are showing Mr. Potter."

"It's fine Professor. I just want them to know that if they attempt it a second time during the sorting, that they will receive more than a minor backlash."

Professor McGonagall stared both Snape and Dumbledore into submission before she nodded towards Harry. "You may continue with the sorting Mr. Potter. I doubt that they will try that a second time. Especially after being accused publicly."

Harry nodded his head as he sat back down and placed the Sorting Hat back onto his head. He slowly lowered his shields for the hat. He didn't want another attack to happen.

"Ah, now I can see you clearly. Well, well, well, Harry Potter. It is a pleasure to finally be able to sort you."

"Likewise, it's a pleasure to finally be sorted."

"Now where shall I place you? I see aspects in you that would place you well in any of the four houses. Hm, this is tough. I haven't had anyone this difficult to sort since ... well ... I shall not divulge that bit of information."

"Understandable, take your time."

"Hmm, you seem to have a slight connection to three other students that I've sorted today. I wonder how deep a connection." Harry felt the hat dive deeper into his mind. "Very interesting indeed, you seem to have a deep connection with four girls. However, I have only seen three so far. Perhaps the other has yet to show herself. No matter, I still need to place you."

"Sir, if I may. Could you please place me in Gryffindor?"

"Why choose Gryffindor above the others?"

"Well, I don't really want to be in Slytherin."

"I can tell that much," the hat laughed at Harry's mental scowl.

"And I don't feel all that smart, so Ravenclaw is out of the question. I wouldn't mind Hufflepuff, but I don't know anyone there."

"So you want to be with the Granger girl then?"

"What, Hermione?"

"Yes, you seem to be attracted to her."

"She's just my friend." Harry felt his face go red.

"Relax dear boy, I only meant attracted magically to her. I didn't realize you were also infatuated with her. Well then, better make it," there was a slight pause, "Gryffindor!"

Harry smiled as he stood up and gave the hat to Professor McGonagall. He walked over to the Gryffindor table amidst all the cheers. He laughed when he saw Fred and George standing on the table doing the Russian Can-Can. They were yelling out to everyone, "We got Potter, We got Potter!" He sat down next to Hermione and across from Neville. He smiled as he gently stroked the breast

feathers of his familiar. Hedwig seemed to know that he would be placed in Gryffindor. The rest of the sorting flew on by without a hitch until the last two names were called.

"Weasley, Ronald," Professor McGonagall called out as Ron stepped forward, the hat was on his head for only a second before it shouted, "Gryffindor!" Ron let out a sigh of relief as he walked over to the Gryffindor table. He looked towards Harry and Hermione before slinking around to sit by his brother Percy. The last name to be called was, "Zabini, Blaise." He was later sorted into Slytherin. Harry clapped for him even though some Gryffindors gave him odd looks. Harry was about to start another conversation with Fred and George about possible pranks when Dumbledore stood up.

"Now I know that you are all anxious to get to the feast, however, I do have a few words that I wish to say to you before you become too distracted. Romper, bumper, stumper, boo." A few people laughed at this, mostly first years. The others nodded their heads in silent appreciation to his supposed "wise words." Harry shook his head in disbelief. He turned to Fred to ask him about his apprehension towards Dumbledore.

"Is he insane, like truly insane?"

"Who, Dumbledore?" Fred looked curiously at Harry whom nodded. "Maybe, but no one usually bothers to ask him about it."

"That seems rather odd." Harry was about to ask another question when he saw a mound of food appear before him. All curiosity faded as he began to pile food onto his plate. He amazed himself when he found that, despite talking the entire day, he still had things to talk to his friends about. He had always wished that he could have friends his age to talk to, and now that he was going to Hogwarts, he had all that. Just when he thought he couldn't eat another bite, the plates were filled with all kinds of desserts. He threw caution to the wind and piled on random desserts. Soon Harry was laden down with food and he was beginning to doze off. The plates soon vanished and Dumbledore once again rose to address his students.

"Now I know that you all wish to retire to your warm beds, but there are a few more announcements that I feel I must say. The Forbidden Forest is off-limits, hence the name Forbidden Forest. Secondly, our caretaker Argus Filch has asked me to remind you of the list outside

his office of banned items. Thirdly, the third floor corridor on the east side is off-limits as well to those who do not wish to die a horribly painful death."

Some of the students were beginning to whisper about the third floor corridor.

"Now, I do believe it is time to retire to your beds. Your Prefects shall guide you to your houses and inform you of the new password." Before anyone got too close to the doors, Dumbledore stepped towards the Gryffindor table. Harry, who wasn't paying attention to Dumbledore, saw something purple move out of the corner of his eye. He looked to his right to see Professor Dumbledore standing behind Neville looking at Harry. Harry raised an eyebrow in mock curiosity.

"Harry, I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions." Harry saw a twinkle in Dumbledore's eye that, oddly, seemed to annoy him.

"Sir," Harry replied without a hint of emotion as he continued to stare at Dumbledore.

"I was wondering if you could come with..." Harry held up a hand to stop Dumbledore mid sentence.

"I'm afraid you've misunderstood me."

"Pardon?" Dumbledore looked slightly confused. He didn't believe that Harry's affirmation of his presence could be misconstrued as something different from what it was.

"I didn't say sir in response to your presence. I had said sir to inform you that I do not appreciate you calling me by my first name, that I wished for you to call me sir. It's either sir, or mister. Actually I would prefer you call me lord, thanks to my Dukedom that I only just realized that I had." Harry waited for the information to sink in.

Those who had been paying attention to the conversation suddenly gasped. Harry hadn't even told his friends that he was considered a Duke in the magical world, possibly even the muggle world. The information started to spread like wildfire. Whispers were racing through the hall towards the other tables. Even the professors at the

staff table began to whisper to one another about the new information.

"I'm sorry. I don't believe I follow you." Dumbledore smiled his grandfatherly smile and attempted to sway Harry with another twinkle in his eye.

"It's actually very simple sir. When I went to get my will, I found out that I was the heir to quite a few people. This led me to becoming a Duke. I do believe that it was Godric Gryffindor's side of the will, which gave me my title. Semantics aside, I would much rather you call me Lord Potter, as only my friends can call me by my first name."

Everyone was looking between Dumbledore and Harry with shocked looks on their faces. No one had ever reprimanded Dumbledore for anything. Harry had even gone so far as to insult his intelligence. Professor McGonagall, sensing a disturbance, hastened towards her Headmaster's side.

"Mr. Potter, what seems to be the trouble? I do hope you aren't giving Headmaster Dumbledore any trouble on the first day."

"Oh not at all Professor McGonagall, I was just informing him how I would like to be addressed."

"And how would that be?" McGonagall somehow knew where this was going.

"Well, since I'm a Duke, I'd much like to be called Lord Potter by those of whom I don't know."

"Well then, Lord Potter..." Harry cut her off.

"Please call me Harry." Professor McGonagall looked confused. Harry also caught a quick look of anger come from Dumbledore. "You have yet to do anything that I deem necessary to forbid calling me by my first name. Therefore, I ask that you call me by Harry. After all, it would get rather confusing keeping a mental list of how I want each person to address me."

"As I was saying ... Lord Potter, I wanted to discuss with you a matter of utmost importance."

"I do believe that can wait, I'm rather tired and feel that I'd be able to better keep my attention if I'd rested. Oh, one more thing," It looked painful for Dumbledore to acknowledge the boy who was derailing every attempt to get him alone. "I was wondering about my living arrangements. Surely the Lord of Hogwarts deserves his own quarters." This small sentence caused an even greater storm of whispers.

"Perhaps we should discuss this in a more private setting Harry." Dumbledore sighed when Harry stared at him without moving, "Sorry, Lord Potter." Harry nodded as he got up out of his seat.

Harry quickly bent back down and whispered to Hedwig, "Hey, love, why don't you go and play outside for a bit. Then come find me later on, okay?"

"If you insist, don't cause too much trouble."

"Don't worry I won't. I'll see you later." Harry gently scratched Hedwig under her chin. He watched her fly away before he went with Dumbledore and McGonagall.

The three of them, Harry, Dumbledore, and McGonagall, were about five feet away when Harry stopped. He turned back towards his friends and waved for them to follow. Hermione and Neville jumped up instantly, their exhaustion completely forgotten. Once by Harry's side, the group, whom Dumbledore looked slightly displeased at the additions, walked out of the Hall. They immediately stepped into an unused classroom as the students tried to catch a glimpse or a word that was being discussed. Dumbledore turned towards the door and pulled out his wand. He closed it and performed a silencing charm on it.

"Now that I believe we shall be undisturbed I would like to ask you a question."

"Ask away," Harry held out his arms in welcome.

"Surely you do not wish to have your own quarters."

"That's more of a statement than a question, but I shall answer it anyways. Yes, I do wish to have my own quarters. I do not want to be disturbed if I just want to be alone."

"Surely the Gryffindor common room can be used for that purpose." McGonagall interjected.

"While I do not deny that the Gryffindor common room is probably a suitable option, I just wish to have my own quarters." McGonagall nodded her head in understanding.

"Harry," Harry acted as if he didn't hear his name when Dumbledore said it. Dumbledore sighed before he continued, "Lord Potter, why are you so adamant about requesting your own quarters?"

"Be grateful that I'm still requesting and not demanding." Harry was now getting annoyed at his Headmaster's pussyfooting around.

"Harry, while at Hogwarts you will not treat your Headmaster with disrespect."

"Sorry Professor McGonagall, perhaps you're right." Harry turned back to Dumbledore. "Professor Dumbledore, I request my own separate quarters. I shall still adhere to the school rules and be in my common room before curfew."

Dumbledore smiled his grandfatherly smile. He believed that he was beginning to reel Harry back into the side of light. "I will see to it that you can have your own accommodations whilst staying here at this school."

"Thank you Professor Dumbledore."

"Just tell both of us the password and I'll get set on finding a suitable location."

"Oh that won't be necessary."

"Did you have a location in mind then?"

"Well, no, but it was about my password. I think that only Professor McGonagall needs to know about the password."

"What if you desire my assistance with something?"

"Surely a man with such esteem need not concern himself with the life of a mere eleven year old boy. Or am I mistaken, is your life not as important as you claim?"

"Harry," McGonagall decided to stop another potential argument. She then turned to Professor Dumbledore, "Perhaps, it might be best if I only know the password. If anything truly goes wrong in which he needs your assistance Headmaster, he will notify me and I will notify you."

Dumbledore saw no way of winning this argument so he sighed and nodded his head. He undid his spells on the door and ushered the group out of the classroom. The group was a few paces down the hall when Harry turned around and called back to Dumbledore.

"Professor there was one thing I wanted to ask you though." Harry looked straight at Dumbledore's eyes with a pleading look.

"Anything my dear boy, what is it?" Dumbledore felt victorious once more.

"Well it's more of a statement than a question." Harry looked towards the floor.

"You can tell me anything you like m'boy." Dumbledore put the utmost sincerity behind his voice.

Harry then looked back up towards Dumbledore with the coldest stare he could muster. Dumbledore was taken aback for a fraction of a second before Harry spoke.

"The Potter line will not be so easily controlled."

(A/N): Ooh, can you feel the electricity in the air? I sure can. Harry defies Dumbledore left and right and then smacks him with a double whammy at the end. What will become of this little outburst? Will Dumbledore get revenge? Find out next time on another exciting episode of Harry Potter HSS. Ciao

P.S. There is always a method to my madness. The actions between Dumbledore and Harry do have significance. They will be

sorted out by sometime between the third year and the fifth year. Everything in good time.

P.P.S. I've been reading a ton of Harmony stories and I'm starting to run out. I ask you the reader if there are any out there that you've particularly enjoyed. My wants are simple, it has to be long, like 10,000 words or longer at least. I've read through the epics and the short stories. I need more to satiate my thirst for Harmony. As it is, I've started three other separate Harmony stories. If this goes on, I fear I will lose time to write this one. I hope that doesn't happen, I really love writing this story. Anyways, enough of my complaining.

P.P.P.S. If you see something that is strikingly similar to an event in a story that you've read or that you've wrote, please tell me and I'll try to correct it. Unless you give me permission to use it, then I'll give you credit. Thanks all and no more ranting from me. Read x Review.

(A/N): Quick thing, this is the first chapter in my history of writing that was 10k+ words. Another quick thing, Thanks for all the stories you guys suggested to me, I've read just about all of them and they have satiated me for the week. Now to some of the reviews. This is a general answer to a few of the constant repeats in the reviews, please read these notes and you won't have to keep asking this question. No this is not going to be a Harem, I'm pretty sure I've answered this before. This is a Harmony story. The True Lokre, thanks for the review, if you don't like the story then stop reading it. Everything that Harry is doing is explained in this chapter, and no he is not going to be superman. Jarno, thanks for the review, I'm just going to say this... Pics or it didn't happen. You can say how many belts you have till you're blue in the face. That doesn't mean I'm going to believe you. I'm also not calling you a liar, it's just that I've asked a bunch of other people and they say that it is quite possible. One friend was in the military, he was trained on how to fight. He's seen smaller people take out larger people. I will believe him first. I have personally seen my sister take out guys twice her size, it's pretty funny. But in all seriousness I have received more 'yes this is possible' than 'nope can't be done'. So I'll stick with my fight, but I did offer somewhat of an explanation. Anyways, onto the story. I'm glad that so many people like this story. I hope I don't disappoint anyone. There are around 2 more chapters until I get to the chapter that Leonineus didn't post. I'll have to take a good look through that one though, it does some things that even I don't think would happen exactly that way. Some of you will be surprised, but that's enough foreshadowing.

Dumbledore barely noticed Harry and his group walk away from him. He was shocked at his words. 'How could he know? Who would have told him? I have to find out how much he knows. I need him to stay with the light. His current actions have him drifting to the line between light and dark.' Albus turned around and walked towards his office. He would need to come up with a new plan to keep Harry on the side of the light, and he knew just how he could do it.

Harry, Hermione, Neville, and Professor McGonagall were on there way to Harry's new quarters. The group was silent for the most part until Professor McGonagall turned towards Harry.

"Mr. Potter..."

"Harry, please call me Harry," Harry turned towards Professor McGonagall and smiled.

She just couldn't say no to that smile of his, so much like his father's smile. "Very well, Harry. What did you mean by what you said to Albus?"

"Simple, I'm not going to be controlled by anyone anymore. Not unless I want to do it myself." He shrugged as he turned a corner to the main tower. "Which floor is it?"

"It's on the sixth floor," McGonagall said as they started up the flights of stairs.

"Harry, how did you know you could get your own quarters?" Hermione turned her head slightly towards Harry.

"To be honest, I didn't actually believe that I could. I just wanted to see if I could push Professor Dumbledore to accept, and apparently it worked."

"So you did this on a whim?" Neville turned towards Harry as well. Harry made a small mental note that Neville seemed a lot more confident than the boy did from the train.

"Basically," Harry ran his fingers through his hair, making his already messy hair wilder. Hermione felt her gaze linger on his hair for a few seconds longer than she intended. She quickly looked back towards his face.

"Mr. Potter ... Harry, who told you to tell Albus that you couldn't be controlled?"

"You might not believe me if I told you." Harry looked away from McGonagall's gaze.

"You look so much like your father after I caught him during a prank." Harry smiled to himself. "But you have your mother's eyes."

"That's what I'm told."

"I do miss your parents Harry. They were good people."

The group continued in silence until they reached the sixth floor. They then turned towards a small corridor, which housed a large painting at the end of it. The portrait was of a tall man with brown scraggly hair and a big bushy beard to match. He looked rugged yet kind, almost like Hagrid.

"Godric Arthur Pendragon Gryffindor." Harry said as they approached the painting.

"Good evening lad, and who might you be? How did you know of my middle names?"

"I'm Harry Potter, your distant heir. I know of your middle names because that's what you went by in the muggle world."

"Well, I should probably have greeted you differently."

"No, your greeting was fine and is preferred." He then turned to Professor McGonagall, "Professor, is Godric Gryffindor going to be guarding my quarters?"

"Yes, all you have to do is place your hand on the painting and say your new password and it shall be put in place." She then turned towards Neville and Hermione, but still talked to Harry. "I assume you wish for them to know of the password as well?"

"Oh yes, I want them to know the password so that they can come and go as they please." Harry then thought for a moment before he turned to Godric Gryffindor's painting. "Godric, perhaps you could liaison with the Gryffindors' common room portrait in case either Neville or Hermione don't make it back to their common room in time for the curfew. That way, if anyone wants to know where they are, their portrait will know."

"I suppose I could do that," Godric then turned to Professor McGonagall, "Professor?"

"I think that would be a good idea." She then turned to Harry with a knowing look in her eyes, "Though I do hope, because of your age, that you won't be having Miss Granger in your quarters after curfew."

Harry blushed profusely at these words. "No, you misunderstand. I would sleep elsewhere while she would sleep in my bed."

"Or you could just ask for another room." Godric butted into the conversation with a smile on his face. Harry looked confused so Godric continued. "While in my quarters, you need but simply ask for extra accommodations and I shall supply them."

"T-That would probably be a good idea." Harry turned towards Hermione who was blushing just as badly as he was. Neville was trying to hide his laughter from his friends.

"Well Mr. Potter," Harry looked up at the Professor with a raised eyebrow, "Sorry, Harry. Now that we've got your devious intentions out of the way, perhaps you should form the password to your common room."

Harry nodded as he turned towards the portrait of Godric Gryffindor. He was deep in thought, trying to come up with a good password. He then smiled as he placed his hand on the painting, "Amicus." Harry looked at his two friends then at Professor McGonagall.

"What does that mean?" Hermione asked.

"Friend," McGonagall smiled down at Harry.

Godric nodded as the edges of his painting glowed for a brief second. Then his portrait swung open revealing a large entrance to an even larger common room. The common room was about the size of four classrooms put together with a fifteen-foot high ceiling. Chandeliers hung from the ceiling adorned with ever-burning candles. There were armchairs and loveseats placed in a semicircle around a large fireplace. The floor was made of redwood and had lush carpets over it. On one side was taken up by wall-to-ceiling bookshelves, filled with books. At the end of the common room was a staircase as well as a few doors, most likely leading to living quarters.

Everyone looked around common room with awed looks in their faces, save for McGonagall. She only smiled as she watched the children admire the room. Harry and Neville sat down on the two present armchairs. As soon as they did this, a roaring fire erupted in the fireplace showering them with warmth. Hermione rushed over to

the bookshelves and started running her hand over the titles of the books.

"Harry, do you mind if I?" Hermione looked back towards Harry whom turned his head towards her.

"Go for it Hermione, you can come here all you want and read all the books you want. If you run out, I'll just ask Godric to make more." Harry smiled as he saw Hermione grab a book and plop down on the loveseat.

"Well, actually Harry m'boy, I didn't make the books." Godric said sheepishly from one of his paintings inside the common room.

"Oh, then who did?" Harry looked at him curiously.

"You did, sort of."

"What do you mean 'sort of'?" Harry raised an eyebrow in confusion.

"This room was made out of your heart's desires."

"That sort of makes sense, but I've already got a lot of books, why did I want more?"

"You wanted your friends to be happy here as well."

"Go on," Harry motioned with his hand for Godric to continue.

"Harry, you wanted a place to be alone, so you made this room. Neville wanted a place to relax, hence the fireplace and comfy chairs. Hermione wanted a place to learn and read, hence the books. All of this was from your desire to make your friends happy, a very good thing, if I do say so myself."

Harry slowly nodded his head in realization. "So all of this is basically what my friends and I wanted?"

"It's a good thing he wasn't sorted into my house," A voice came from just out of eyesight.

"Who said that?" Harry looked around.

"I did dear," A tall woman walked into frame from the side of Godric's painting. "My name is Rowena Ravenclaw. I'm the creator of Ravenclaw House."

Rowena was very beautiful. She had long black hair that shimmered in the light. She had blue eyes and an aura of kindness and serenity. She was wearing blue robes that had many pieces of parchment sticking out of random pockets. She also had a quill jutting from her breast pocket.

"Good evening Mrs. Ravenclaw," Harry stood up and bowed slightly to Rowena.

"My, such good manners on this one," Rowena smiled as she placed a hand on Godric's shoulder. "Too bad you couldn't be as nice as he is." She looked sternly at Godric who seemed to cower under her gaze. Harry simply laughed at this.

"Ooh Godric is getting another lecture," Said an unknown male voice.

"This I have to see," Said an unknown female voice.

Harry saw two more figures enter Godric's painting. One was a tall thin man. The other was a short healthy woman. The man had long black hair down to his shoulders. He had what looked like a sneer but you could tell that by his kind green eyes it was a half smile. He was dressed in a green robe and was holding a cane with a metal snakehead at the top. Harry assumed this was Salazar Slytherin.

The woman, whom Harry assumed was Helga Hufflepuff, was a head shorter than her companion was. She had short blond hair and brown eyes. She was also wearing canary yellow robes and had on a pair of planting gloves. Harry could just make out bits of dirt covering the robes.

"I would assume that the newcomers are Salazar Slytherin and Helga Hufflepuff?"

"Maybe he would have done fine in your house my dear," Godric was trying to get back on Rowena's good side.

"Godric," Rowena started to rub the bridge of her nose. "We're wearing color coded robes. If he couldn't tell who we were, I would be very worried how he even managed to get here at all."

Everyone laughed as Godric slumped even further down. Harry watched on as Godric, Rowena, Helga, and Salazar continued to talk and bicker as if they were children. He shook his head as he got up and walked to Professor McGonagall.

McGonagall turned her head from the painting when she saw Harry approach her from the corner of her eye. "Yes Harry, did you need something?"

"Two things actually," Harry smiled at McGonagall.

"What would those two things be?" McGonagall returned the smile.

"When do classes start, I would like to get a rough map of the castle down in my head so that I don't get lost."

"Well, since today is Sunday, it would normally be tomorrow. Although, we do give students at least two days to acquaint themselves with the layout, or reacquaint themselves, so that would make the first day of classes this Wednesday."

"Good, good," Harry nodded his head. He was then silent for a moment.

"And the other question?" The occupants of the room were now looking at the two of them. The founders had forgotten their squabble.

"Earlier, you said that I looked like my father, but had my mother's eyes."

"Yes," McGonagall sighed as she placed a hand on Harry's shoulder. "They were two of the best students I've ever had the privilege to teach. They were good people, and I'm still saddened by their..." She paused for a second, not wanting to say the last word.

"Their deaths," Harry finished in a monotone.

"Unfortunate, but yes, I know it might seem harsh of me to ask, but where is this going?"

When Harry looked back up at Professor McGonagall, he had a wide smile across his face. "How would you like to see them again?"

"I have a picture of them, and you, on my desk. I look at it everyday."

"No not that. What I mean is the real thing. How would you like to see Lily and James Potter?"

"How would that be possible?" Hermione asked this as she placed her book down and walked over to her friend.

"Easy, I have a Pensieve. They gave me corporeal memories of themselves so that I would be able to see them again."

"But, how is that possible? I've never heard of anyone doing anything like that before."

"Really, I wonder why no one's tried it."

"Harry, Pensieves are very rare. You're the only person, that I know, that has one." McGonagall was confused but couldn't hide her curiosity. "You said that I could see your parents again?"

"Yeah, I did. Did you want to see them now?" Harry made another mental note, this time to find out exactly how rare Pensieves were.

"I think ... I'll have to think about it Mr. Potter."

"Please, I said you could call me Harry."

"Well, Harry, despite my curiosity and your generosity, it is rather late. We should all be getting some rest."

"Alright Professor McGonagall," Harry smiled after letting out a yawn.

"I think after that offer, we can drop the formalities. You can call me by my first name, Minerva."

"How about Aunt Minnie, can I call you that?" Harry smiled as he made the joke. The smile vanished as he saw a tear escape her eye. "What's wrong?"

"You haven't called me that in ten years."

"Well, I guess I need to catch up then, Aunt Minnie."

Professor McGonagall smiled as she turned towards the portrait hole. "I'll escort Miss Granger and Mr. Longbottom to their common room."

"Hold on, I have to give them their trunks."

"Why aren't their trunks in their rooms?"

"Something happened on the platform that caused a certain amount of suspicion towards the moral standing of some wizards or witches." Professor McGonagall raised an eyebrow. "I'll tell you about it tomorrow with Hermione, only if she wants to though." Harry looked towards Hermione who smiled and nodded her head. "It's settled then, tomorrow around the evening maybe," Professor McGonagall nodded her head. "Alright, I'll see you tomorrow then Aunt Minnie."

Harry then pulled out Neville's trunk and Hermione's trunk. He added a small charm to them, which would cast Finite Incantatem upon being tapped twice on the top. After saying their goodbyes, the founders included, Harry walked through the door to his room. It was rather spacious but not too extravagant. He saw Hedwig sleeping on a small roost near a large window. He smiled as he looked around the room. It had a king sized four-poster bed, a large dresser with a mirror above it, and a door that led to a personal shower and lavatory. Harry resized his trunk and sat it at the end of his bed. He then took off his clothes and armor and tossed it down into his clothing compartment. After putting on a fresh pair of boxers, Harry climbed into bed and quickly fell asleep.

Harry once more had the dream of flying through the clouds. He looked down and saw a miniature countryside rolling below him. Up above him was Hedwig, singing her beautiful song. Harry turned around to look at Hermione. He saw her flying close behind him. The blonde haired girl was still blurry to him. He looked on his other side

and saw Daphne and Susan flying close by. He smiled as he looked back towards the setting sun in front. Tomorrow he would see if Susan or Daphne approached him.

Harry was awake before the sun was the following morning. He quickly dressed in a pair of shorts and a thin white shirt. After putting on some running shoes, Harry walked out of his common room and down the stairs to the front doors of the castle. He breathed in the fresh morning air and gently slapped the sleep out of his face. He then set off at a brisk pace towards the Black Lake. A slight mist was forming above the lake, which caused the grounds to haze over in a fog.

Harry jogged twice around the Black Lake, and then he started to jog the length of the Forbidden Forest. As soon as he reached the edge of the forest, Harry's ears were assaulted with the various sounds of the forest's denizens. Harry tried to tune out the sounds as he jogged his course. He turned back towards the castle when he finished running the length. When he reached the doors, he heard a familiar cry above his head. He looked up to see his familiar gliding down towards him.

"Hey there Hedwig, did you have a good night?"

"I did, thank you for asking." Hedwig gently landed on Harry's outstretched arm. "Finished one of your runs? I can tell," Hedwig shifted slightly on Harry's arm.

"Yeah, I am a bit sweaty."

"Perhaps you should take a shower then because you also smell."

"I love you too." Harry scoffed as Hedwig flew away.

Harry shook his head as he headed back inside the castle. There were long rays of sunlight coming into the halls through the stained glass windows. The trip up to his dorm seemed to be shorter on the way up than it was on the way down. He thought how that could be possible, but quickly set it aside. He would try and figure out Hogwarts logic later. After giving Godric the password, Harry headed into his room. He quickly disrobed and threw his dirty clothes into his charmed wardrobe. The wardrobe would clean his clothes while it was in there.

Harry stepped into the shower, letting the cool water flow over him. He quickly washed his hair and his body before turning the water off. After a quick toweling off, Harry walked back into his room.

"Harry, a lovely little songbird is in the common room waiting for you."

"Thanks Godric, tell her I'll be a minute." Harry pulled out a set of clothes and started to get dressed.

"I don't see why he wants me to go in there." Harry heard Hermione's voice through the door. He thanked the heavens above that he at least had enough time to put on some boxers and a pair of pants before Hermione entered the room. "Harry, are you ready..." She quickly shut her mouth as she saw Harry in the middle of getting dressed. They both froze when they saw each other. Harry was in the middle of buttoning up his pants, while Hermione still had her hand on the doorknob.

Harry opened his mouth to speak only to have Godric cut him off.

"Oh Harry, didn't see that you weren't dressed." Godric gave him a sly wink.

"Godric Gryffindor I swear by all that is holy, I will use you for kindling if you do that again!" Hermione shouted this as she turned to leave the room.

Harry quickly finished getting dressed then walked into his common room. He found Hermione sitting on the couch with a book in hand. He cleared his throat to get her attention. She looked up at him with a slight red tinge in her cheeks.

"Yeah, sorry about that, I told Godric to tell you to wait while I dressed. I don't think he's a good listener." Harry drew his hand through his hair in embarrassment.

"Well as long as he doesn't do it again, then I can forgive him."

"Shall we go to breakfast then?" Harry asked as he held out his arm for Hermione.

"I'd love to. Neville should be waiting there for us already." Hermione took his arm and they went down to breakfast.

Morning dawned for Albus completely differently. He was frustrated with the way that Harry was acting. He shouldn't be like this at all, Albus thought to himself. He wondered what he would have to do in order to make this boy his weapon. He would have to pull out all the stops. He suddenly had an idea. Harry liked Minerva. Perhaps Albus could use her to get to the boy. Albus snapped his fingers, went to his fireplace, and called for Minerva.

"Yes Albus, what did you need from me so early in the morning?" Minerva was less than pleased at receiving her summons before the sun even rose.

"I need you to talk to Harry for me."

"I don't see why you can't do that yourself, although, he obviously wishes to be left alone for the most part."

"You don't know what he did Minerva."

"Enlighten me then," Minerva took a seat in front of Albus' desk.

"I've heard stories from some other students. I've also confirmed the authenticity of said stories."

"I hope it didn't involve Legilimency."

"Of course not," It did involve Veritaserum but he would never tell.

"Then share with me your stories of Harry's misdeeds." Minerva expertly hid her sarcasm towards her boss.

"It seems that Harry attacked five fourth year students before he boarded the train to Hogwarts."

"Was this attack unprovoked or was it in self-defense?"

"The boys say that they never attacked Harry, that he threw the first punch."

McGonagall raised an eyebrow at this. She had a lot of experience with half-truths when punishing students. "I sense that you are hiding something from me Albus."

"It's not pertinent to Harry's case."

"So some other student was being bothered by these boys and Harry came to rescue said student, is that it?" Albus looked taken aback for a second but that was all McGonagall needed. "I will not punish self-defense, even if that defense is for another student."

"Minerva, there's more," Albus said after a sigh of defeat.

"Oh do tell," Minerva trusted her boss, but he seemed to be at fault for most of his accusations towards Harry.

"He verbally assaulted two students on the train ride here. He then threatened one of them with a weapon."

"I shall have to speak to him about that then." Minerva then got up to leave. "If that is all then I shall take my leave."

"Minerva, something must be done about the boy's character. He seems to lash out at anyone whom doesn't agree with him."

"Albus, for Merlin's sake, the boy is eleven years old. He's acting out because he's immature. I would be surprised if he didn't do things like that."

"Not everyone requests their own dorm room Minerva."

"Not everyone owns half of Hogwarts."

"Do you think that he would use that power to override our authority?"

"No I don't think that he'll do that." Minerva then walked back to Albus and placed a hand on his shoulder. "Trust me on this Albus. Harry Potter is a good boy. You just need to look past the immaturity and find the lost soul underneath. He needs guidance, not a commanding voice. He might just need a few more friends before he calms down, maybe even when he's older."

"I pray that you're right Minerva. I don't want to have lost Harry before I've even had him."

"What do you mean by that Albus?"

"There are some things that I can not say Minerva. Know that I do this for the greater good."

"I hope that "greater good" also includes the feelings of a boy who had lost his parents at the tender age of one."

"What would I do without your guidance Minerva?"

"You'd probably run yourself into an early grave." Minerva then left Albus' office.

"I hope you are right Minerva. If the boy is immature and just acting out against authority for the fun in it, then I won't have to resort to my contingency plans." Albus then popped a lemon drop into his mouth and returned to his paperwork.

Harry and Hermione were halfway to the Great Hall when they were stopped by Professor McGonagall.

"Hello Aunt Minnie. Was there something I could do for you? Perhaps you've thought about my earlier proposition?" Harry gave Minerva a lopsided smile.

"I wish I came to you on better terms Harry. Unfortunately, Albus has shed light on a few of your actions yesterday, three actions in particular, if you get my meaning."

Harry, smile faded into a slight scowl. "Minerva I had good reason to do what I did yesterday. Maybe I was out of line on a couple of occasions. However, I would repeat the first action, which I believe I know which one you are talking about, over and over again until the end of time." Harry then slid his arm around Hermione.

"Would you care to explain yourself? Albus left out most if not all of the details of said actions."

"Not here, maybe your office?"

"As you wish, it's at the back of my class. If you'd follow me I'll show you."

"Actually could we do this after breakfast? I haven't eaten anything and I was exercising this morning. I've worked up a massive appetite."

"Perhaps that would be wise. I too haven't had my morning meal yet. I'll see you in half an hour then?"

"I'd like to bring Hermione with me please."

"Is this about what you wanted to talk about last night?"

"I'm afraid so," Harry looked towards Hermione with a saddened look on his face.

"Very well, I shall see you later Harry."

Harry nodded his head as he led Hermione into the Great Hall. They quickly found Neville saving a seat for them. Once they sat down, they began to eat their breakfast in silence. Neville wondered why no one was talking but decided against asking. He felt that they would tell him if he needed to know.

"Hey Nev," Harry got Neville's attention after he finished a piece of jam toast.

"Yeah Harry?"

"Hermione and I were going to Aunt Minnie's office after breakfast."

"What happened?"

"Nothing, I think. She just wanted to talk about what I did at the platform and on the train."

"Did you want me to come with you two?"

"Only if Hermione wants you to come, it involved her more than it did me."

"I would like it if you could come with us Neville." Hermione smiled towards Neville.

Neville nodded his head, "Sure thing Hermione, anything for a friend."

"Now that that's out of the way, back to the grub," Harry then piled a mountain of eggs onto his plate and dove right in.

"How can you eat so much?"

"I was running around Hogwarts for a couple hours this morning." Harry said in between mouthfuls of eggs. "It really works up an appetite you know."

Hermione and Neville finished their breakfast long before Harry did. Once all three were fed, they stood up and headed out of the Great Hall. They slowly made their way through the corridors looking for Professor McGonagall's class. None of them knew where it was, and they had forgotten to ask McGonagall as well. They got lucky when they spotted Nearly Headless Nick floating in a corridor ahead of them.

"Excuse me Sir Nicholas," Harry shouted, getting Nick's attention.

"Yes what can I do for you?"

"I was wondering if you could point me in the direction of Professor McGonagall's classroom. We don't know where it is and I think we're lost."

"You're closer than you think." Nick turned around and pointed at the end of the corridor they were in. "Simply walk to the end of the corridor and turn right, it's the first door on the right after that."

"We were that close?"

"So it would seem." Nick laughed as he waved goodbye to the trio.

Harry shrugged his shoulders, "Oh well, let's go."

Once they were in front of the classroom, they knocked on the door. They heard a faint noise from the other side of the door telling them

to enter. Once inside they saw Minerva sitting on the other side of a long wooden desk with a small sheet of paper in front of her.

"Ah, Harry," She then looked at the clock to her left, "Thirty minutes exactly, excellent timing."

"Thank you Aunt Minnie."

"Please sit down. I see you decided to add Mr. Longbottom to the inquiry."

"Yes, he was there for the second and third ... incidents." Harry said the last word with a hint of distaste.

"Something tells me that we will be here for awhile."

"The time table only matters based on how much Hermione wants to tell," Harry looked towards Hermione

"I think it's best if we tell her everything since we first met, Harry."

"Are you sure?" Harry looked at his first friend with concern.

"Yes, I'm sure." Hermione smiled at Harry. She then turned to Professor McGonagall and started the tale. "I had just said goodbye to my parents when I noticed Harry at the other end of the station. I wanted to talk to him but I decided to put away my trunk first."

"You never said that to me." Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Well, you were staring at me and I wanted to know why."

"Oh, yeah that," Harry had thought that Hermione meant she had the same dream he did. "I just saw you with your parents and... well." Harry looked away.

"I'm sorry I brought it up Harry."

"No, it's fine. Continue with your side of the story."

"Well... I had tried to push my trunk onto the train but it was far too heavy for me to lift. These five older students walked up to me and started speaking down to me. They were wondering where my

parents were, so I told them they had to get back to their practice. My parents are both dentists." Hermione then looked away from Professor McGonagall.

"Miss Granger, what happened next?" Minerva was using a voice she rarely used when talking to a student about an 'incident' that they were involved.

"They called me a mudblood, and then they pushed me to the ground and started to kick me. They wrecked my things, and kicked me to near unconsciousness."

Professor McGonagall was livid. She was going to give Albus a stern talking to, and soon. This attack certainly wasn't unprovoked, as he had said. She started to make mental notes to ask Dumbledore.

"Why is it you don't seem to be injured?"

"That was my doing." Harry decided to jump in, in order to fill in the blanks that Hermione left. "I walked up to those boys and told them to stop. They all laughed at me so I attacked. I honestly didn't think I would win," Harry shrugged. "I guess I just got really lucky. Either that or it was a bout of accidental magic. I was pretty angry at the time."

"That would definitely explain how you could take on five boys at once at your age."

"I won't lie to you Minerva. I'm not that great of a fighter. The truth is, I've only been working to improve myself for a little less than a year." Harry then shook his head. "Anyways, back to the story. After I sent the boys running, I cast a small hex on them."

"A hex, which hex?"

"Something I made, it makes a permanent mark on their forehead. My spell wrote 'BIGOT' on their foreheads, it should have been noticeable at the feast."

"I will have to see about that, though very few spells are permanent."

"Oh, I didn't read that part. I just thought, if I put enough magic in it, it would stick. I guess not," Harry looked downtrodden.

"At least they will have to talk to Madam Pomfrey to get it removed. We'll be able to find out who they are."

"That's good," Harry smiled, though it faded quickly as he turned back to Hermione. She looked pale at recalling those painful memories.

"I quickly looked Hermione over, in order to see how badly she was hurt. It was bad. I would like it if she could get checked by Madam Pomfrey today." Minerva nodded in acceptance. "I did some rudimentary triage and fixed her up as best as I could."

"Rudimentary triage?" Minerva was a little curious.

"I healed the bones and the cuts as best as I could." Harry shrugged.

"How do you know those spells?"

"Truthfully, I don't know them too well. The only reason I can cast them is because I have very large magical reserves."

"I assume those rings have a part to play in that?" Minerva pointed to the rings on Harry's left hand.

"Another story, for another time," Harry paused for Minerva to accept his rain check. When she did, he continued with the tale. "After that, we talked for awhile. That was when Neville showed up."

"I would have been at Harry's side fighting off those boys, but I'm a coward. I couldn't even tell my Gram what was happening."

"The boys may have used a notice-me-not charm."

"Then how did I see them?" Neville asked and Harry was curious too.

"If you know what to look for, you can see through the charm." The trio looked confused. "You and Harry must have sensed trouble and, thusly, you were able to see through the charm. Not all magic is infallible or omnipotent."

"I have a few questions as well but I'll save it for the end of the story."

"Very well, continue Harry."

"Well, some time after meeting Neville, Hermione decided to take a nap on the train ride. She was too excited to sleep the night before then. A boy named Ron Weasley entered the compartment. His actions annoyed me from the start." Harry turned to Hermione, who looked confused, "You were asleep when it happened." He then turned back to Minerva. "He walked right over to Hermione, bent down real close to her, and then just stared at her for a few seconds."

"He did that?" Hermione was embarrassed and disgusted at the same time.

"Yeah, he only did it for a few seconds before he sat next to Neville. We had asked him to keep it down so that Hermione could sleep. However, as soon as I mentioned my name, the idiot started screaming questions at me."

"That's when I woke up Professor," Hermione took over from here. "I was still slightly groggy from the nap, so I was a little confused at what was happening. He then ordered me to get some things from the Trolley Witch. I refused of course. He then started in on Harry. Harry was only trying to defend me when..." Hermione hesitated. She looked towards Harry for support.

"He insulted my parents," Harry clenched his fists over the arms of the chair. "He said that they were glad they were dead, so that they wouldn't have to deal with me any longer. I regret how far I escalated the fight, but I do not regret the fight. I grabbed his collar and slammed him against the compartment door. The glass shattered but Hermione stopped me from suffocating the boy. I then asked him to leave, but he wouldn't. I then drew out Excalibur a few inches and he got the point."

"Excalibur?"

"It's a sword I inherited from Godric Gryffindor. It's in my room right now. I don't think I should carry it around with me everywhere I go."

"A wise decision Harry."

"After the weasel, I mean after Weasley left, Malfoy barged into the compartment. At this point, I was through with being bothered. He insulted Neville and Hermione the minute he entered the room. I thought up a way to get him to leave without having to lift a finger. I insinuated about my understanding regarding Mr. Malfoy's sexual preference."

"Elaborate for me please."

"He called him gay, Professor McGonagall." Neville blurted out.

"Harry, while I do commend you for standing up for your friends, you shouldn't go around insinuating other people's sexual preference. It is very rude to say the least."

"I know it was wrong, but I didn't think anything by it. I have a friend in Diagon Alley. He works at Phil's Finished Furnishings, with the owner. He's quite hilarious when he's had a bit of gin. It doesn't bother me one bit that he bats for the other team."

"I would still like to point out that it is wrong to insult someone that way, if you must, call him a ferret or something."

"Professor, surely you aren't allowing me to insult another student."

"I most certainly am not," She sounded serious but the smile that was threatening the edges of her mouth betrayed her emotions.

"That's really all that happened yesterday." Harry shrugged his shoulders before running his hand through his hair.

"Well, Albus has a few things to answer to later on in the day. For now, I say a small slap on the wrist. Now, since school has officially started, even though it is a weekend. I am awarding Gryffindor fifteen points for bravery, and standing up for your fellow student."

"Thanks Aunt Minnie." Harry smiled as he stood. He then remembered the real thing he wanted to ask Minerva. "Why do people do that though?"

"Do what Harry?" Harry looked towards Hermione with a forlorn face. Minerva sighed before she answered. "It isn't something that I'm proud to say about our community. The civil war between purebloods and non-purebloods was a very frightening one. It left a scar on all of us. It wasn't just the adults, which suffered, but the children as well. The old ways were passed on to every child of a pureblood family."

"Isn't there someway to change all that?" Harry looked towards Minerva with hurt in his eyes.

"A lot would have to change for that to happen, Harry."

"What about the school?"

"I suppose that we could add a few rules to alleviate the hatred towards the two groups."

"Baby steps Aunt Minnie, baby steps." Harry smiled.

"I should have done something like this sooner. I feel that I've been blinded by the light that is Albus Dumbledore."

"A single voice is lost in a crowd of people."

"It's a shame we don't have a class on philosophy, you would be a good candidate for the position."

"I only say what I've read in books." Minerva smiled as she watched the three gather in front of her desk.

"If that is all, then I'll let you return to whatever activities you had planned for the day."

"Thank you Aunt Minnie. I'll try to keep myself in check."

"If that doesn't work we'll do it for him," Neville offered.

"Definitely," Hermione smiled.

"What would I do without you two?"

"Turn the school into a Dictatorship with you in charge?"

Harry turned to Hermione and placed his hand over his heart, "That hurt Hermione, right here." He patted his chest. "Oh, and one more thing Aunt Minnie, do think about my proposal from last night."

"I will Harry, and you shall have your answer by the end of the week."

"I'll hold you to that." Harry then left Minerva's office with the company of his two friends.

When she was left alone she let out a long overdue sigh. "Perhaps I've been blindly following Albus for too long. I wonder what you two would say to me if you knew what I had done." Minerva had pulled a small photo from the corner of her desk closer to her. The picture contained a loving couple holding a small baby boy.

"James, Lily, what went wrong that fateful night?" Minerva slid the portrait back to the corner of her desk before she returned to her forgotten paperwork.

It was nearing noon before the trio exited the castle and walked onto the grounds. They found dozens of students enjoying their brief recess before their first school day. Harry then turned around to his friends and spread his arms to the view behind him.

"So, what shall we do for today?"

Neville was quick to offer a possibility, "How about a quick lie around before lunch? After that, we can start exploring the castle."

"I second that motion," Harry nodded. He then turned to Hermione, "How about Hermione? We need a unanimous decision. Otherwise it's a hung vote."

"Majority usually wins Harry," She had her hands on her hips.

"Not in my group of friends. We try our best to find something that we all want to do."

"That could come to bite you in the rump one day."

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

Hermione sighed and shook her head muttering something about boys before walking to a rather deserted patch of grass. She sat down and leaned back onto her hands. Harry smiled and plopped down on his back next to her. Neville sat opposite the two and started to pull out small strands of grass. The evening was passing by in silence as the three sat to brood over their own thoughts. Harry had a grin on his face as he closed his eyes.

"It is a nice day though." Hermione said as she tilted her head back and looked up to the sky.

"A perfect day, for a perfect lie around."

"Don't forget that we have to map out the castle later."

Harry shifted onto his side and propped his head up in his hand with a bent arm. "That gives me an idea." Harry waited for both pairs of eyes to fall onto him before continuing. "What if we actually make a map?"

"Harry, you should know that the castle changes all the time. It's impossible to map out. It's in..." Harry cut off Hermione in mid tangent.

"Hogwarts, A History," Harry laughed. "I know how the castle operates," He paused for a brief second before adding, "Sort of."

"Then how do you suppose we make a map of the castle?"

"Magic my dear Watson," Harry faked holding a pipe to his mouth.

"That has to be really advanced magic in order to charm a map that changes based on the castle's morphing."

"Possibly," Harry shrugged. "Who says it has to be done this instant. Let's make it a project. See how long it takes before the map is done. My dad and his friends made one." Harry then ripped out a tuft of grass, "Although he did fail to mention where he left it."

Hermione looked away from Harry for a second. "Hey Harry, do you think we could meet your parents?"

"Of course you can. When Aunt Minnie decides to visit them, and I know she will, we will all go together. How does that sound?"

"It sounds wonderful," Hermione smiled as she looked back towards the sky. Her face scrunched up in concentration as she started to follow something flying in the sky above. "Harry, isn't that Hedwig flying around up there?" Hermione pointed straight above her.

Harry sat up and looked towards the sky. "Yeah, you're right, that is Hedwig. I wonder what she wants."

"It's nice to see you too Harry." Harry could picture a fake scowl forming on Hedwig's face. That is, if she had a face.

"You know I didn't mean it like that," Harry lifted up an arm for Hedwig to land. Once again, Hedwig's presence caused many people to stare at the group.

"Where were you this morning?"

"I was at breakfast, and then I went to Aunt Minnie's office."

"Well you missed the mail."

"Oh, who sent me a letter?"

"Tom and Annette sent you a letter." Hedwig stuck out her leg for Harry to get his letter.

"Thanks love," Harry was about to pet his familiar but she had already taken off to the skies. "Love you too," Harry smiled as Hedwig turned her head.

"I'm off to hunt my breakfast. I'll see you later."

Harry shook his head as he opened his letter. "Yeah, it's from Aunt Annette and Uncle Tom alright. They want to know how the sorting went, and if I've made friends my age yet."

"Why would they want to know if you've made friends your age?" Neville glanced up from his project in the grass.

"Diagon Alley is only full of adults. So it's kind of hard to make friends of people my age."

"That's too bad, but at least you now have us." Hermione nodded her head in agreement.

"I'll write a reply and send it off later today." Harry stood up and brushed the grass off his pants. "Shall we investigate this castle then?" Harry looked between his friends when something in Neville's hand caught his interest. "What are you making there Nev?"

"Oh this," Neville held up a circular object made of grass. "I was just fiddling with the grass. I guess it turned into this."

"That's pretty good if you made it out of grass."

"It's not that hard if you do it right."

"You'll have to show me how to do that later." Harry helped his two friends off the ground. "As for now, we are going to explore the hell out of this place."

"Harry, language," Hermione's stern voice made Harry flinch.

"Sorry Hermione," Harry smiled towards Hermione and ran his hand through his hair.

Hermione walked towards the castle and muttered something about boys being boys. The trio walked through the castle for the better part of an hour before they admitted that they were once again lost. They turned a few corners and walked up and down stairs, yet they still couldn't get their bearing.

"What is up with this castle?" Harry said as he leaned back against the wall.

"It'll take some time to get used to it I guess." Hermione folded her arms across her chest.

"Let's just go into some of these rooms and ask someone where we are."

"Sounds like a good idea."

The first door that they entered just happened to be the Hospital Wing. They looked around and saw numerous paintings of nurses or doctors helping patients. There were about two dozen beds lined up against the walls. No sooner had they entered then a short witch exited an office to their left. She wore a red robe with a white overlay. On the white overlay was an imprint of two snakes curling around a needle with wings.

"I don't usually see students this early in the school year," said the witch.

"Oh we were just lost. Is this the Hospital Wing?"

"Yes it is," The witch looked the three over, "None of you seem to be injured. You also don't look ill."

"Actually I have a favor to ask you," Harry paused for a second.

"Madam Pomfrey, that's my name."

"Thanks Madam Pomfrey, my name is Harry Potter. This is Neville Longbottom and Hermione Granger." Neville and Hermione said their hellos as they waved.

"Hello," Madam Pomfrey nodded towards each of the three before turning back towards Harry.

"Can you check out Hermione? I want her to get a full scan."

"Can I ask you why you want this?"

"I was attacked by five older boys before I got on the train."

Madam Pomfrey immediately rushed over to Hermione. She cast a few muttered spells over her. She was concentrating on the runes that appeared in the blue strand that was coming out of her wand.

"If I'm going to give you a full scan I'll need to bring you to one of these beds. Both of you stay here while I work." Harry and Neville nodded as Madam Pomfrey escorted Hermione to the nearest bed.

After conjuring privacy screens, Madam Pomfrey got to work.

"Can you take off your shirt for me please?"

Hermione nodded as she slowly took off her shirt. Madam Pomfrey then cast a few more diagnostic spells over Hermione as she lay on the bed. She scowled as she read the runes coming from her wand. By the end of the list of runes, Madam Pomfrey was furious. She was careful not to direct her anger to her patient as she turned back to her.

"Thank you dear, you can put your shirt back on now." Hermione nodded as she quickly dressed.

After Hermione was decent once more, Madam Pomfrey removed the privacy screening. As soon as she did, Harry and Neville walked over to them.

"What's the news Madam Pomfrey?"

"I would like to know exactly why her bones were broken and then hastily mended."

"The boys that attacked her beat her quite severely. I did my best to scare them off to their parents. Once that was done, I took her to an empty cabin and did a rough scan myself. Since I didn't know the spell, I had to use my hand. I found some of the broken bones and healed them as best as I could. I don't know if I found them all.

"Well, there are still a couple of bones that haven't healed all of the way, but just barely. Other than that, I commend you for your spell work." Madam Pomfrey disappeared into her office only to return seconds later with a small vial of blue liquid.

"What's that?"

"This will help mend the bones back to perfection." She handed the vial to Hermione. Hermione downed the vial in one gulp. Her face scrunched up in disgust but felt the ache disappear.

"Thanks Madam Pomfrey."

"It's no trouble dear. Does anybody else know of this incident?"

"Aunt Minnie does," Harry chipped in.

"Who's Aunt Minnie?"

"Oh, sorry, Aunt Minnie is Professor McGonagall."

Madam Pomfrey smiled, "At least she can do something about it now."

"Thanks again Madam Pomfrey." Harry smiled, "Can I ask you something else?" Madam Pomfrey nodded once before Harry continued. "Where's the Great Hall? We got lost while exploring, and now we can't find our way back."

"Turn left when you leave the room and then turn right at every second suit of armor."

"Thanks," The group waved goodbye before heading back to the Great Hall for lunch.

Lunch passed by without incident. Once finished the trio got up and walked to the door. Unbeknownst to them, they were followed by two groups of people. One group consisted of a Susan Bones and Daphne Greengrass. The second group consisted of Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle. When Harry's trio turned the corner out of the Great Hall, they were immediately stopped by Malfoy and his posse. Susan and Daphne decided to hang back and watch the confrontation.

"Oi Potter, I'm only going to give you one more chance to join me."

"Look, Malfoy, this is getting really old. Can you please just leave me alone for at least one day?" Harry turned around and started to walk away but stopped in his tracks at Malfoy's next words.

"Fine, take your squib and your mudblood whore with you."

Harry spun about on his heels and walked straight up to Malfoy. He delivered a quick punch to Malfoy's stomach. Malfoy doubled over in pain. Crabbe and Goyle quickly retrieved their boss and walked away.

"I need to let off some steam," Harry turned back to his friends. "How about we head back to my common room?"

"Yeah, I think we've had enough excitement for the day." Hermione stuck close to Harry as the trio walked back up to Harry's common room.

Once inside Harry plopped down on his couch. Hermione sat down at the other end of the couch with a book in hand. Neville decided to read as well. Harry was calmly counting backwards from one hundred down to zero. He sat up in mid-count suddenly remembering the letter that his aunt and uncle sent him. He decided to write a reply real quick while they were there.

Dear Aunt Annette and Uncle Tom

Thanks for the letter you sent me it really means a lot. I was a little nervous when the sorting started but I realize now that I was just being silly. I was placed into Gryffindor with my two new friends. Their names are Hermione Granger and Neville Longbottom. Everyone in Neville's family thought he was a squib until he bounced down the yard after being dropped from a second story window. He seems a little nervous. I think it's just a lack of confidence. I'm going to try and help him in that department. As for Hermione Granger, she's absolutely brilliant. She's really smart and likes books just as much as I do, maybe even more. She's really nice too. Hedwig even allowed her to pet her. I don't think she's taken to new people that quickly before. I might just be over thinking things. Thanks again for sending me the letter I'll write again soon, maybe next week if I'm not swamped in homework. I love you both.

Love, Harry

"Hey Hedwig, can you come here for a second?" Suddenly a white flame burst over the table where he was writing the letter. Out of the flame appeared Hedwig, she was gently preening herself when she was called.

"Did you need me to send a letter?"

"You know me too well love. It's for Tom and Annette. Make sure they give you an extra piece of bacon for this one."

"You spoil me Harry."

"I only do it because you are so precious to me." Harry could have sworn he saw Hedwig blush.

"Harry, there are two lovely young ladies standing outside. I think they wish to speak to you." Godric called out from one of his paintings.

"Let them in," Harry sat up and began to gently stroke Hedwig's back. He looked up and immediately recognized the two girls that entered. "Hello ladies. Was there something I could do for you?"

Daphne immediately took the free seat nearest to Harry. Harry was a little bemused by her action but did nothing about it. Susan was the first of the two to speak.

"Is that really a phoenix?" Susan's barely hid the awe in her voice.

Harry smiled as he nodded his head, "Yeah, though she can be quite the handful sometimes." Harry skillfully drew his hand back from Hedwig just in time to miss the peck that he was about to receive, "Though I mean that in the nicest of ways possible."

Hedwig glared at Harry but, after a few seconds, she held out her leg for him to tie the letter. After Harry finished the knot, Hedwig took off through an open window. As soon as Hedwig left, Harry noticed that Susan and Daphne's demeanor changed. Susan looked nervous, while Daphne looked warily between the two other girls in the room. It was almost as if Daphne was sizing up the competition.

"I assume that both of you didn't come here because you wanted to see my owl." Harry sat back down on the couch.

Harry noticed the look that both girls were giving each other. It wasn't a hostile look, but a look of confusion. He also noticed this look come from Hermione. He smiled as he realized what was going to be asked.

"Let me guess, you wanted to ask me about the dream that you've been having for the past few nights, the one about flying up in the clouds with me and three other girls."

As soon as he said this, the three girls abandoned their staring contest as their heads shot towards Harry.

"How ... how did you know?" Susan was the first to break the silence.

"Because I've been having them for almost a year now, as soon as I saw the three of you, your faces became clear in the dream, although, there is still the mystery of the fourth girl."

"What does the dream mean?" Daphne nearly yelled this to Harry.

"Relax, relax," Harry was desperate to keep the situation calm. He didn't think this conversation could become hostile. "I don't know what it means either. Maybe we're somehow bonded to each other." That earned a few weird stares from the girls. "I don't mean bonded like that, maybe it's a special bond of friendship or something. I haven't been able to read too much into it. A dream like that is something for Divination, and I don't believe too much in that cock-and-bull."

"Should we ask one of the professors about it?" Hermione voiced a good opinion but Harry shook his head.

"I don't want too many people to know about this just yet. We could try talking to Professor McGonagall, but I don't want to bother her too much with these things. Maybe some books in the library could help. I might even have the books here in my common room. As for now, we do nothing, maybe just hang out, and get to know each other."

"That sounds like a good idea Harry," Hermione might not know what was happening but she felt as if she could trust Harry.

"How about we start with trying to figure this bloody castle out, it's too damn confusing."

Everyone stood up save for Daphne. She was looking towards the floor. She was fidgeting slightly and seemed to be muttering under her breath. Harry was a little worried about this. He knew the look well. She wanted to ask a question but was afraid of the consequences that could arise. Harry walked over to Daphne until he was right in front of her. He then squatted down in front of her so that he could see her face. Daphne was taken aback by the sudden appearance of Harry and jumped slightly.

"W-What are you doing?" Daphne asked. Her face was slightly red.

"Something seems to be troubling the young maiden."

Daphne was at a loss for words. She expected Harry to question her, although she was nervous to respond. What Harry actually did was quite the opposite of what she expected. He had called her a maiden. Did that mean that he liked her? She would have to find out soon.

"It's ... it's about Draco."

"And how is our flamboyant prince involved in what's troubling you?"

"You know the rumors that are flying around about him, right?"

"Which ones?"

"The one about him being gay."

"Oh, yeah that one," Harry rubbed his head for a few seconds. "I kind of started that one."

"Well, the other people in the dorm have started to throw that in his face every time he walks by."

"Oh," Harry started to feel ashamed at his attempt to insult Draco. "I didn't think it would cause so much trouble."

"Well, they say if he wants to prove his ... affinity towards women that he has to bed one as soon as possible."

This caught Harry by surprise. "He's only eleven years old. It probably doesn't even work down there yet."

"He seemed really confident in it. So he decided to go after the prettiest girl in Slytherin."

"How did you want me to get him off your back?"

"Well, I know that I look better than most of the girls there but I wouldn't call myself the prettiest."

Harry gently placed his thumb and forefinger under Daphne's chin and raised it to eye level. "Don't sell yourself short. It only makes it easier for others to do the same." Harry said this in as soothing a voice as he could muster. "That goes for everyone here." He turned towards his other friends and smiled. He then noticed the slightly hurt look in Hermione's eyes. He didn't know what he did to make her upset but he would ask her the first chance he could. He then turned back to Daphne and repeated his earlier question.

"I heard about you being a Duke, is that true?"

"Unfortunately yes," Harry said with a heavy sigh. "While I don't particularly like the title because of the attention I get, it does help me avoid certain scenarios."

"Is there a possibility that you could make me your vassal? That way Draco couldn't do anything to me. I can do a lot of things. I can cook and clean." Daphne looked like she was about to start hyperventilating.

"Relax Daphne. I'll make you a protected member of my house's name. However, I won't make you a vassal, that's not how I operate."

"Thank you Lord Potter." Daphne jumped out of her seat and hugged Harry.

"It's Harry, please call me Harry. All of my friends call me Harry. Only my enemies call me Lord." Harry then paused for a second, "Or my business associates that I haven't met yet."

"Regardless, thank you for this Harry."

"Okay," Harry looked nervously around the group. "How do I do this? Do I do it like a knighting or something?"

"You use your sword Harry." Godric offered. "You state that Daphne is now a protected member of your house and that she shall come to no harm while you still breathe. Also make sure to avoid any possible loopholes."

Harry nodded as he went into his room to fetch his sword. He came back seconds later and unsheathed it in front of Daphne. "I, Lord Harry James Potter, do hereby grant you, Daphne Greengrass, the offer of being a protected member of House Potter. Do you accept this offering?"

"Yes, Lord Harry James Potter, I, Daphne Greengrass, accept your offering of protection under the name of House Potter."

Harry nodded as he gently tapped the flat end of his sword once on each of Daphne's shoulders. When he was finished, he returned the blade to the weapon rack in his room. Upon returning, he clapped his hands together. As he parted his hands, a separate door appeared to Daphne's left.

"These quarters will be available to you should you need to escape the Slytherins."

"I can't thank you enough Harry."

"Eh, don't think too much about it. I was just helping a friend in need." Daphne nodded her head towards him as he offered a smile. "Now, how about we explore the hell out of this castle?"

Harry gestured towards the door. He received a unanimous vote for yes as the group exited the common room. Before they left, Harry gave the two new girls the password to his common room should they ever want to visit and hang out. Once that was out of the way, they spent the rest of that day and all of the next day surveying the land known as Hogwarts.

(A/N) Good god this took a lot out of me. I hope it was up to snuff. If you still don't like it after all that then all I can say is stop reading this because it's obviously not for you. Other than that, if you are still anxious for the next chapter, cool. Now, I don't know if every chapter from now on will be 10k+ words. This chapter just seemed to write itself. Read x Review. And I'm still accepting ideas for more stories to read. I can't get enough of the Harmony stories out there. Thanks all and tune in next week for the next exciting episode of Harry Potter HSS. This is Kunaiswarm, signing off. Ciao.

(A/N) First and foremost, I am so very sorry for taking so long to post this chapter. I swear on my magic that I was either confunded or under the imperius curse. I got caught up in other stories I write and a bunch of fics that I read. Other than that, not much to say in this batch of notes. Most of the questions have died down, or I just missed them. The only one I saw was from Mikee. S/he asks what a Harmony story is. Harmony is a nickname for a fic that features Harry and Hermione as the main couple. There are a plethora of terms out there for the other pairings. I do not know them all, but they are out there. Some things are said in this chapter that might seem out of place, trust me they are there for a reason. Without further ado, I present the twelfth installment of Harry Potter HSS.

-edit- I have to give major props to Nyeste. Without him, my story would be a grammatical mess.

Wednesday dawned brightly for Hogwarts. Harry had just finished his morning run when he noticed the sky was significantly brighter. He decided that it was time for his run to end so he started walking towards the castle. He then noticed Hermione walking from the Owlery. He jogged a bit to catch up to her.

"Hey Hermione, how's it going?"

"Oh, hi Harry," Harry noticed the saddened look again. "I'm doing fine. How about you, was your morning run invigorating?" Hermione put on a faked smile.

"Hermione, tell me the truth." Harry prodded.

"Truth about what?"

"I can see that smile is being faked. I should know, I've become quite good at faking emotions."

Hermione instantly dropped the smile. "I'm sorry Harry."

"Hey now, there's no need to be sorry. Sometimes it's good to hide your emotions. That way you can fool your enemies better."

"Harry, you aren't my enemy. You're my," Hermione stopped for the briefest of seconds, but Harry saw it, the pained look in her eyes showing once more, "Friend."

"I sense much sorrow in you young Skywalker." Harry did his best Yoda impersonation to try and lighten the mood.

"I see someone's a Star Wars fan." Hermione's mood improved a little bit by Harry's joke.

"I've never actually seen the movies. I've only heard them when Dudley was watching them."

"Why didn't they let you see the movies with them?"

Harry shook his head, "Oh no, you won't change the subject that easily Miss Granger."

Hermione laughed at Harry, a truly jovial laugh. "I see I can't fool you."

Harry smiled but his tone was serious, "Hermione, what's wrong? Did I do something to upset you? If so, I'm sorry, I didn't know."

"Harry, it's fine, it's not that important."

Harry wasn't going to let this go until he fixed this. "Hermione, I don't want to lose one of my best friends because of a misunderstanding. I..." Harry caught himself as he realized what he was going to say next. 'Did I really almost say that I care too much about you to lose you? What does that mean? Do I like Hermione more than I think I do? Maybe the Sorting Hat was right. Maybe I am infatuated with Hermione. He did say that I wanted to be in Gryffindor so that I could be with Hermione. I'm being silly. I wanted Gryffindor because of Hermione and Neville.' Harry was confused. He must have been thinking for quite awhile because Hermione was beginning to misinterpret his pause.

"Harry, it's fine, you don't have to say anything. I know what you're going to say anyways. They always say they want to be my friend, but they always leave in the end."

Harry saw tears welling up in Hermione's eyes. Before she could leave, Harry quickly embraced Hermione. "Hermione I could never leave you. I know we've only known each other for a few days, but it feels like I've known you all my life. That dream that I've been having.

It was there for as long as I can remember. I was just confused as to what it meant. I now know why I picked you out of the crowd of students at the train station instead of Daphne or Susan. Even the Sorting Hat knew before I did."

Hermione mumbled something into Harry's shoulder. Harry gave her a little bit of room so that she could talk. "What did the Sorting Hat know before you?"

"He said that I had an 'infatuation' with you. I was startled by this at first. I didn't know how to react to it. I'm only eleven. I started reading a book from my trunk about stuff like this. It told me everything that I needed to know about the dream, and why I saw you first out of the three others."

Hermione didn't want to get her hopes up about Harry. She knew she liked him. She spent many days talking with her mum about things like this. She learned at a very young age, too young for some, about these feelings. She had asked her parents how babies were made. They didn't want to lie to their daughter, even if it was a simple white lie. They didn't tell her about a stork or how it was magic. They sat her down and said that it involves a certain act between a man and woman. She still didn't understand it all too well. Her mother decided the best way to learn about it was from a neutral party, the perfect one being a book. She was embarrassed at first when she read that it involved sex between the two people. She read further to see that it was a perfectly normal thing.

She had read many books during her childhood. Most of which were fantasy books. They involved a brave knight in shining armor saving a damsel in distress. She knew that she was far too young to get into anything serious. That didn't stop her from wanting a romantic relationship with her prince charming. She had even been rescued by him from a perilous situation. She wanted Harry to be her special someone someday, maybe not now, maybe not in a few years, but eventually.

"Harry, what are you saying?"

"I don't know if I could ever lose you Hermione. You were the first friend that ever saw me for me. Sure, there were people in Diagon Alley, but they were adults and saw me as a child. When I revealed myself, they only saw me as The-Boy-Who-Lived. You were the first

person, besides Tom and Annette, who saw me for someone other than just the silly Boy-Who-Lived. You saw me as just a boy who wanted a friend." Harry separated from Hermione so that he could look her in the eye. "I like you Hermione. I don't know how much, but I will know eventually. I'm willing to wait, if you are."

Hermione smiled as she once again buried her head in Harry's shoulder. She couldn't stop the tears from flowing. Harry stood there embracing Hermione for as long as she needed. He gently rubbed her back while she emptied out the sorrow that had built up over the past few days. Hermione's sobs eventually faded, but neither of them wanted to end the hug.

"Feeling better now?"

"I'm sorry for unloading all of this on you Harry. It's just ... that night with Daphne. I thought you liked her more than me. Then the letter I just sent my mum. I told her I met someone who I liked, and then after that night with Daphne, I told her that I was wrong. I told her that you would only be a friend, even though I would have liked a little more. Does that make me a bad person?"

"Hermione, Daphne is just a friend who needed my help, and you can always send more letters to your mum. You could never be a bad person. No matter how hard you tried to be evil, I would still stand by your side. Besides, the Hermione I know is nice and caring. I don't think she has a nasty bone in her body."

"Thanks Harry, that means a lot."

"Well, if I screw anything else up let me know. I'm still new to all the different types of relationships out there. It's only been a little under a year since people started to show me anything other than hatred."

Harry and Hermione stood there in silence for a few minutes before Hermione pulled back to look Harry in the eyes. She could get lost in those eyes. She didn't know why anyone would want to hate him.

"Did you want to talk about it?"

"Talk about what?"

"About your past, before the Deadmans took you in."

Harry closed his eyes and looked down to the ground. He let out a sigh before looking back up at Hermione.

"It's fine if you don't."

"Part of me doesn't want to tell anyone. I don't like people feeling sorry for me. It's kind of annoying. The other part of me wants to tell you everything. I feel like if I just keep it behind the walls in my head, it'll all spill over one day and I'll do something that I'd regret."

"You don't have to tell me now. Just promise me that you'll tell me one day."

"Some of it is pretty graphic Hermione. I don't want to scare you. I know it scares me still just to think about it." Hermione wrapped Harry up in another hug. He felt like he could get used to it. Hermione, on the other hand, felt him flinch once more.

"Harry, can I ask you a personal question?"

"Sure, you can ask me anything."

"Why did you flinch when I hugged you?"

Harry slowly pulled out of their hug. He turned and sat on a nearby bench. Hermione sat down next to him.

"Back when I lived with the Dursleys, those were my original family, I wasn't liked very much."

"That story from the train, when you were being chased in your house. I'm guessing it wasn't a friendly game of tag was it?"

"No, I burnt their breakfast. Uncle Vernon was furious. He chased me through the house with a knife. When I hid in the closet, and he couldn't find me, he stabbed the door with the knife so hard that it went in about an inch."

"All because you burnt the breakfast?"

"I was only four years old. I didn't know that food would burn if you cooked it too long."

"You were four when he did this?" Hermione couldn't believe what she was hearing. "Why didn't anyone do anything about it?"

"Aunt Petunia and Dudley would only join in. They wouldn't stop it."

"What about the police?"

"Who would they believe? Would they believe a boy or his uncle?"

"They would certainly believe you."

Harry shook his head. "They made sure that I didn't go. They also made sure to only hit me where it wouldn't show."

"You should let Madam Pomfrey take a look at you."

"It's fine Hermione, I'm used to it."

"Harry, if that line isn't going to work on you, it most definitely will not work on me."

Harry looked up towards Hermione. He saw both anger, and worry, in her eyes. He smiled as he nodded his head.

"Alright, but on the weekend, I don't want to miss my first few classes."

"Promise?"

"Promise," Harry nearly fell to his side when Hermione jumped at him from her side of the bench. "Hermione, how many times are you going to hug me this morning?"

"As much as I need to," her voice was muffled from speaking into his shoulder.

"Well, how about we hold off on it for awhile."

"Why?" Hermione pulled away from Harry.

"I just got done running around the lake for a few hours, I'm sweaty and smelly. I really need a shower."

"Oh," Hermione's face went red, "I didn't notice."

"How could you not, I think everyone in Scotland can smell me."

Hermione hit him lightly on the shoulder, "Prat. Go get washed up, I'll wait for you in your common room."

"Alright, alright."

Hermione accompanied Harry to his room. She sat down on one of the couches, with a book as usual. Ten minutes later, Harry was showered and dressed. Hermione laughed at him when he entered the room.

"What?"

"Your hair," She pointed to the top of his head. "Can't you do anything about that?"

Harry reached up and felt his hair sticking out everywhere. He roughly patted it down into a somewhat manageable state. He looked expectantly at Hermione for her approval. He smiled when she nodded her head. They were about to head out when they heard a door open.

"Oh, I didn't know you were already up." Daphne walked out of her room.

"I didn't hear you come in after we went to our common rooms for the night." Harry looked concerned.

"Well, I was sleeping in my bed when a noise nearby woke me up. I think it was just Pansy Parkinson playing at me, but I didn't want to take any chances."

"I thought boys weren't able to get into the girls rooms." Hermione's face scrunched up in confusion.

"Not in Slytherin," Daphne looked away from the two of them. "It's perfectly acceptable for a man to enter a woman's room to bed her, as long as nothing comes of it."

"Hey now, I don't remember setting that up. My house is for the noble and ambitious, not the demented and perverse. Who in their right mind would do that?" Salazar looked positively livid.

"I think that's a fair question to add to the list." Harry was also angered by this.

"Who should we ask though?"

"Don't worry Daphne. Just use my common room from now on. I'll ask Aunt Minnie about it as soon as I can. When we go to breakfast I want you to sit with us okay?"

"But, I'm a Slytherin, they all hate us."

"They can all sod off then." Harry pulled Daphne into a one-armed hug. He then drew Hermione to him using the other arm. "Let's show Hogwarts that there is no need for separation because of house."

The group then headed down to the Great Hall together. Harry wondered how everyone would take the sudden change in seating. He didn't care too much about it. If they tried to do anything against his friends, they would find out how far he was willing to go for them. When they entered the hall, a few heads turned towards them. They watched as the three of them walked over to Gryffindor table. Daphne looked unsure if she should sit down or not.

"Come on Daphne, you know we won't bite."

"I don't know about this Harry."

"Just sit, if anything happens I'll take care of it."

Daphne hesitantly took her seat next to Harry. Neville was sitting across from Daphne while Hermione was sitting on Harry's other side. Susan entered the hall shortly after Harry, Daphne, and Hermione. She followed all the turned heads towards Harry's group. Harry saw Susan looking towards them and quickly waved her over. Susan looked confused but walked over towards the group.

"Hello everyone," Susan looked cheerful.

"Good morning Susan, would you care to join us?" Harry motioned towards the empty seat next to Neville.

"Are we allowed to?" Susan looked up towards the staff table. A few of the teachers were looking towards the group.

"I don't see anyone stopping us."

"Alright," Susan looked back towards her house table. "Can I bring one of my friends?"

"Sure you can, the more the merrier."

Susan ran towards her table and returned a minute later with another girl. "Hannah, these are my friends. Hermione, Harry, Daphne, and Neville, guys this is Hannah Abbot."

Hannah looked nervous when she was brought over. She looked like she had just broken a dozen rules and was awaiting punishment. Neville scooted over a little bit to make more room for the new member. They all sat down comfortably when Harry spotted someone. He stood up and waved towards Slytherin table.

"Hey Blaise, come sit with us."

Blaise looked confused as his head kept turning between Professor Snape and Harry. Harry was insistent as he waved Blaise over. Blaise slowly got out of his seat and walked over to Gryffindor table. He sat down on Daphne's other side.

"Hello Harry," Blaise nonchalantly said.

"Good of you to join us."

"It seems I didn't have a choice in the matter."

"Oh, but you did. You could have shaken your head and remained at your table. I wouldn't have minded."

"Good to know, although I don't mind sitting here." Blaise looked towards everyone that Harry had invited. "It seems we have a cornucopia of students here."

"So it would seem."

"I do hope we aren't breaking any rules. My father would be very annoyed with me if I had to send him a letter saying that I was in trouble in my first week of school."

"I don't believe that we will get in trouble. If anything we'll just be told to move back to our tables, no harm no foul." The group started to laugh at Harry when he said this. The people sitting on the opposite side of Harry immediately stopped laughing. The group on Harry's side noticed and turned when Neville pointed behind Harry.

"Good morning, I judge by the laughter that you are all doing well." Harry smiled when he saw it was only Professor McGonagall.

"Good morning to you as well Professor McGonagall. I trust you slept well."

"I slept well, thanks for asking. I am just here to pass on, to everyone, their schedules." She handed Harry, Neville, and Hermione their schedules. "I also took the liberty to get your schedules as well." She then handed Susan, Hannah, Daphne, and Blaise their schedules. She then smiled as she left the group.

"Alright what's everyone got?" Harry asked the group.

"Looks like Hufflepuff has Herbology with the Gryffindors first." Susan said.

"We have Transfiguration with Ravenclaw first." Daphne tilted her schedule over to let Harry read it with her.

"After that, Hufflepuff has Potions with Ravenclaw." Harry now had Susan's schedule being shown to him. "It doesn't seem like we have a lot of classes together today,"

Harry was comparing the three schedules. Gryffindor had Herbology with Hufflepuff for the first quarter of the day then had History of Magic with Ravenclaw until lunch. After lunch, Gryffindor had double DADA with Slytherin. Hufflepuff and Slytherin would have Charms together, while doing Double History of magic together after lunch. All four Houses have Astronomy Friday nights after the regular timetable. It wasn't too bad. However, Harry was hoping that he had

different classes today. He wished he had Flying Lessons on his first day but saw that he had it the next day after Transfiguration. Transfiguration was with Ravenclaw, while Flying Lessons were with Slytherin before lunch. Afterwards was Charms with Hufflepuff, then Potions with Slytherin again.

"Why are the schedules so weird?" Harry asked.

"What do you mean?" Hermione looked at him quizzically.

"They don't have any order whatsoever. It looks as if someone was blindly throwing darts at a class list, while choosing who should go where. We don't even always have the same classes together. Look, on Friday, instead of having History of Magic with Ravenclaw, we have it with Hufflepuff. It's weird if you ask me."

"Don't think too much into it Harry, you'll hurt yourself." Blaise's retort was devoid of tone leaving Harry to wonder whether he meant it or not.

Harry was about to ask when he felt a stabbing pain in his forehead. His hand shot up to his scar as it intensified. The group looked worried as Harry started to rub at his scar furiously.

"Harry, what's wrong?" Hermione had her hand on his shoulder.

"My scar, it's burning for some reason. I don't know why, it's never done this before." Harry then remembered the time at Fortescue's shop. "Well, it happened one other time, but it was a lot worse than this."

"Maybe you should see Madam Pomfrey about it." Neville offered.

"I'll go later if it persists. It might just go away." Harry looked around for what could be causing this. His eyes shot towards Headmaster Dumbledore, but he was talking to a rather plump witch sitting to his right. He then caught sight of a professor wearing a turban. "Who's that, with the turban?"

The group looked up towards the staff table. None of them knew who it was. He had to be new. Fred and George happened to be overhearing the conversation when the question was asked.

"That's Professor Quirrell, he's the DADA teacher." One of the twins said. Harry still couldn't tell which was which.

"Why do I get the feeling that he hates me?"

"Are we talking about the same Professor Quirrell?"

"He doesn't hate anyone, he's too afraid to hate."

"He's afraid of his own shadow."

The twins finishing each other's sentences were making his head hurt worse.

"Please, stop, one at a time. I'm not in the mood for the games right now guys. As much as I like you, my head hurts too much right now." Harry closed his eyes and tried to rub the pain away.

"Sorry about that Harry," One of the twins replied. "We know it annoys a lot of people for us to do what we do, but it's normal for us."

"I'm not saying that I don't like it, I'm not even saying it annoys me. It's just my head can't process all this too well. It doesn't help that I have to concentrate on stringing together coherent sentences being said by two people."

"Well, Professor Quirrell doesn't strike me as the type to hate anyone. There isn't a lot known about his outside life. He used to be a good teacher. After his supposed meeting with a vampire, he's been skittish. We think the vampire tried to bite him or something. He doesn't say anything about the meeting and quickly changes the subject."

"Then it's probably Snape that's causing this."

"Harry, that's Professor Snape. Why would he do something like this to a student?" Hermione corrected Harry even though she was worried he might be right.

"He never liked my father, and this feels like a Legilimency attack. I'm supposed to have barriers against this sort of thing though. I don't know why it hurts."

"Maybe we should head to our first class early."

"You might be right Hermione. Besides, I think I've lost my appetite."

Harry quickly walked out of the Great Hall towards the greenhouses for Herbology. He didn't even register that his friends had quickly followed behind him. All Harry was concerned about was getting away from whatever caused this weird pain. He was going to ask Aunt Minnie about it as soon as he got a chance to. Harry was so busy going over the possible reasons why his scar was hurting that he didn't even realize he had been sitting in the greenhouse for a few minutes. Hermione's elbow to the rib brought him out of his stupor. She pointed towards the front of the greenhouse.

"Mr. Potter, are you here or no?" Harry saw that the Herbology professor had been trying to get his attention.

"Oh, sorry, I wasn't paying attention. Yes, I'm here."

"That's good to hear. Just try to pay attention in my class please. I don't want to have to deduct points on the first day."

"I'm sorry, I won't do it again."

The professor nodded her head. She was a rather short woman and a tad on the heavy side. She was wearing a dirt covered gardening robe. She had a pair of dragonhide gloves sticking out of a side pocket. Her short brown hair was swept back to keep out of her face while she worked. Harry saw no visible signs of hair accessories so he assumed it was being held back by magic.

"Okay, now that attendance is over, I can now introduce myself. My name is Pomona Sprout, though you shall call me Professor Sprout. Good morning to all of you new Hogwarts students, I hope your time here will be to your liking." She smiled warmly to the students in front of her. "Today we will be gathering ingredients for Professor Snape. He is low on Dittany, so that is what we will be gathering for him today. Groups of two please or three at most."

Harry, Hermione, and Neville immediately grouped up with each other. Hannah and Susan grouped with a boy named Justin Finch-Fletchley. The two groups made their way over to a couple of

worktables in the corner of the greenhouse. Justin and Neville went to gather the pots that contained the growing Dittany. Hermione and Susan went to get a few gardening shears while Harry and Hannah set up the work area. The class was about to start gathering the ingredient when Professor Sprout stopped them.

"Remember class, in order to get a good cutting, you need only the leaf, not the stem. Use the smaller shears to get as much of the leaf off as possible."

With the newfound information, the students began to work their way through their plants. Harry was proceeding slowly because his mind was still on what happened that morning. He had barely collected one bushel of the leaves while the others were done with two or even three. Hermione looked over towards Harry after she finished her second bushel. She saw that he looked preoccupied.

"Harry, are you sure you're okay?" Harry didn't answer her. Instead, he continued through his task. "Harry, are you even listening to me?" Hermione waved her hand in front of his face to get his attention.

"Huh, what, did you say something?"

"I was asking if you were sure if you were okay."

"Oh, yeah I'm fine." Harry inadvertently cut the stem off with the leaf and added it to the pile ready to go to Snape.

"Harry, most of your leaves have stems on them." Neville grabbed a handful of the leaves and started to cut the stems off for Harry.

"Is everything all right here Mr. Potter?" Professor Sprout had worked her way through the class, stopping at Harry's table. She noticed him lost in thought while attempting to harvest the Dittany.

"He's having a little trouble concentrating Professor." Hermione responded for Harry when he didn't.

"Oh, is that all? Perhaps he hasn't yet adjusted to school yet."

Hermione motioned for Professor Sprout to lean closer to her. She figured that Harry didn't want too many people knowing about what happened at breakfast.

"Professor," Hermione's voice was barely a whisper. "Harry said his scar was hurting this morning at breakfast. At first we thought it was just a headache, but he said it felt like a Legilimancer was attacking him."

"Legilimency, on a student, do you think this has anything to do with what happened during the sorting?"

"It's quite possible. We wanted to take him to see Madam Pomfrey but he refused."

"Well, if his quality of work is going to continue like this for the rest of the class, it might just be best if he went to see her now."

"Honestly, I'm fine." Harry finally realized they were talking about him.

"Harry, you aren't even registering us talking to you." Hermione rounded on him, "I'm worried."

Harry looked towards Hermione, then towards Neville. They both were concerned for their friend. "Is it really that bad?" Neville showed Harry the Dittany that he failed to harvest.

"Mr. Potter, I think your friends are right. You should probably go see Madam Pomfrey. Miss Granger, can you take him there? I don't want him getting lost on the way."

"Yes Professor," Hermione gently took Harry by the arm and led him out of the greenhouse.

Once they were halfway to the castle, Hermione stopped Harry.

"Please don't be mad Harry. I only told her about this morning because I was worried."

"I'm not mad at you Hermione. I just haven't been able to concentrate after the attack."

"Maybe we should tell Professor McGonagall about this tonight after Defense against the Dark Arts."

"You're probably right."

"Come on, let's go see Madam Pomfrey. She should be able to clear the cobwebs out of your head." Hermione smiled as she took Harry's hand and walked towards the infirmary.

They reached the infirmary quite quickly, thanks to their basic layout of the castle that they had plotted out the day before. They entered the infirmary just as Madam Pomfrey was exiting her office. She spotted the two of them and sighed to herself.

"Good morning Mr. Potter, Miss Granger. Shouldn't you two be in class right now?"

"Professor Sprout gave us permission to come here." Hermione had already told Harry that she would do all the talking unless Harry was specifically asked a question.

"Is something else the matter with you Miss Granger?"

"Oh, it's not me Madam Pomfrey, it's Harry."

"What seems to be the problem, other than the fact that he seems to be a bit dazed and confused."

"I think he suffered another Legilimency attack this morning."

"Are you sure?" All joking was put aside as Madam Pomfrey went into healer mode.

"I think so. He said that his scar was hurting. We thought it might just be a headache, but he said it felt like someone was attacking him using Legilimency."

"Was anyone making eye contact with him?"

"No, I don't think so. He was talking to us while eating breakfast when he just clamped his hand over his scar."

"It must have been a skilled Legilimancer to be able to cast it without eye contact."

"Could it have been Professor Snape or Headmaster Dumbledore?"

"I certainly hope not. Why would you suggest such a thing?"

"Well, during the sorting, he was attacked by both of them using Legilimency without eye contact."

"That seems highly unlikely Miss Granger."

"Weren't you there? He stopped the sorting to deal with the issue."

"No, I wasn't. I was sorting through some paperwork in my office during the time of the sorting."

"Is there any test that you can run to see if it was a Legilimency attack?"

"There are quite a few to try and detect a recent Legilimency attack."

"Occlumency," Harry muttered finally joining in the conversation.

"Pardon me dear, I didn't quite hear what you said." Pomfrey turned towards Harry.

"I have Occlumency shields, it shouldn't have worked."

"You have Occlumency shields? You're just a boy, why would you need Occlumency shields?"

"The Potter family ring gives the wearer powerful Occlumency shields."

"You were given shields but haven't trained with them?"

"I guess so," Harry shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't understand Madam Pomfrey. Why does it matter that he knows Occlumency, but hasn't been trained to use it?"

"Let me put it this way. I could hand you a sword and shield right now but that doesn't mean you are suddenly great at swordplay"

"Just because you have it doesn't mean you know how to use it?"

"Exactly Miss Granger."

"What can we do to help him?"

"I can give him a potion right now to help him concentrate but he should train how to use his Occlumency better." Madam Pomfrey then retreated into her office for a few minutes. When she came out, she was holding a vial of steel blue liquid and a small slip of paper. "This drink will help him concentrate for the remainder of the day. This paper will allow you to check out a few books on Occlumency from the restricted section of the library.

"Thank you Madam Pomfrey." Hermione smiled as she took the slip of paper.

Harry downed the potion. "Is there any potion that doesn't taste bad?"

"None that work well Mr. Potter."

"Thanks Madam Pomfrey. I think it's already working."

"I certainly hope so. Otherwise I would have to throw out the batch."

Harry and Hermione left the infirmary and headed back to their Herbology class. They made it back with enough time to spare for Neville to help them finish their bushels. Neville told them that they had been doing that for the entire time they were gone.

"Really, how much Dittany did you get?" Harry was looking at Neville's large pile of harvested Dittany leaves.

"I harvested quite a bit but Dittany is only useful in large quantities. It takes about a bushel of Dittany to make one small vial of essence of Dittany. It takes a lot more to make regular potions."

"Makes sense," Harry shrugged his shoulders as he finished up his bushels of Dittany.

The class ended not long after they finished their tasks. Professor Sprout gathered up the harvested Dittany and awarded Neville five points for his meticulous attention to detail while harvesting the Dittany. Neville was slightly blushing as they left the greenhouse. Harry patted Neville's shoulder in congratulations.

Harry, Neville, and Hermione parted company with Susan and Hannah as they headed up a flight of stairs towards History of Magic. Once inside, they quickly found a group of seats near the middle of the class. The three of them looked around the room for the professor but couldn't find anyone other than students. When the last student settled into their seat, the students started to talk amongst themselves.

"Where's the professor?" Harry looked around the room once more but shook his head in defeat.

"I don't know, maybe he's just late." Hermione pulled out her textbook on goblin wars and started to flip through it.

Just as Harry did the same, a ghost floated through the blackboard and floated over to a parchment on a desk. The ghost was thin and had a long white beard that traveled down to his chest. It looked as if he was wearing clothing for the seventeenth century.

"Good morning class, my name is Cuthbert Binns. I will be your professor for History of Magic. I do know that this class will seem very tedious to most of you. I myself wish I could teach something different. For reasons out of my control, I am forced to teach you about the goblin wars. Now, I shall take attendance. If you are here, say so. If you are absent then say nothing."

Some of the students laughed at Professor Binns' attempt at humor. He then proceeded to take attendance. He glanced up at Harry when he called his name but quickly turned back to the parchment on his desk. Once finished he turned towards the blackboard and started to write down notes for the students to copy. Hermione was writing her notes down almost as fast as Professor Binns could put them on the chalkboard.

Harry was confused though. How can a ghost write on a blackboard? He chalked it up to another thing that had to do with

magic. His list was becoming longer with each passing minute. Harry then had a thought. He raised his hand and waited for Professor Binns to call on him. When he didn't turn around, Harry cleared his throat to get his attention.

"Yes Mr. Potter, did you have a question about Haggard the Horrible?"

"Well, not really actually."

"Then I will have to ask for you to wait until I'm done."

"It's rather important actually."

"Ask away then," Professor Binns placed the piece of chalk down and turned fully towards Harry.

"How long ago did the pureblood supremacy start?"

"I'm not sure I follow?"

Professor Binns wasn't fooling Harry by feigning ignorance. "How long ago, exactly, did purebloods start to say that they were better than half bloods and muggle-born?"

"It has been that way for as long as I can remember, and that's saying something. I've been dead for nearly three hundred years."

"Is there any possibility of changing it?"

"Nothing short of a revolution would be able to change it."

Harry started receiving odd looks from the rest of the class. Most of the looks were coming from the Ravenclaws. Harry looked around and saw the stares he was receiving so he just stared back.

"Let me ask all of you then. Why is it that you believe you are better than someone?"

A Ravenclaw that Harry didn't know answered his question with a sneer in his smile. "It's because we're smarter than you lot."

"Muggle or Pureblood?"

"Pureblood."

"When was the first recorded evidence of flight taken?"

"That's easy. My dad told me it was around the year twelve twenty six. That was when the first broom was invented." The boy then folded his arms across his chest.

"Perhaps I should have rephrased that question. When was the first recorded evidence of muggle flight taken?"

"Muggles can't fly, they can't use brooms without magic."

"Wrong on two counts," Harry shook his head at the boy.

"Muggles first learned to fly when the Wright Brothers invented a plane that was powered by human energy. It was first successful December 17, 1903. In addition, muggles can fly brooms, as only the broom needs to be magical. Runes are etched into the base of the broom that is covered by straw. Sure, a magical person can make a broom go faster than designed but it isn't a requirement."

"You're making that up."

"Don't believe me if you like. It doesn't make you or me any less right."

"What are you getting at?" Another Ravenclaw student asked.

"Muggles are just as good as witches and wizards are. So in essence muggle-born wizards and witches are just as good as purebloods, it doesn't matter what is in your blood it's what's in your brain that makes the wizard."

"Or witch," Hermione added.

"Too right Hermione," Harry said with a quick glance at Hermione.

"Mr. Potter, while I do enjoy this diversion from the main topic, I do need to teach it. Perhaps we can schedule this for another time."

"Sorry Professor, I think I got carried away."

"No need to be sorry, you have made a good argument that I have failed to see despite my long years of teaching."

Harry apologized once more before taking his seat. He looked back towards the Ravenclaw boy. The boy looked angry with Harry for blowing off his knowledge nonchalantly. Harry avoided the stares he was getting from the Ravenclaw students.

"Do you think I went too far?" Harry whispered to Hermione.

"No, I think you were brilliant Harry. Maybe it will just take some time for them to turn against the way that they were raised."

"I guess I shouldn't have expected it to be like flipping a switch."

"Just concentrate on History of Magic for now. We'll talk more afterward at lunch."

"Alright Hermione."

Harry was glad when History of magic was finally over. He was beginning to develop a cramp in his wrist from writing so much. He was packing away his things when Professor Binns floated over to him.

"Mr. Potter, a word if I may."

"What can I do for you Professor?"

"Was what you said about the ... Wright Brothers true?"

"Yeah, I read about it in a history book."

"Maybe you should talk to our Muggle Studies Professor. Her name is Charity Burbage, maybe you can suggest some things for her to go over. She's a pureblood and doesn't know too much about muggles, other than what she reads in her books."

"Maybe I can give her some books of mine, but I don't know if I'll be able to do this as a full time thing."

"I didn't expect you to. Maybe we should get a parent of a muggle-born to assist her with her teachings."

"That's something you would have to discuss with the Headmaster. I may own the school but I can't decide who teaches what."

"I shall suggest it Mr. Potter, and thank you for that much wanted diversion from goblin wars."

"Professor, if I may ask, do you hate your job?"

"I do not hate to teach, but I do hate what I teach."

"Perhaps a subject change is in order."

"No, I just wish I could teach something current along with something in the past."

"It's never too late to ask," Harry smiled.

"I'll try that. Thank you, and good day."

"I'll see you next class." Harry waved and headed out the door where his friends were waiting for him.

"What was that about?" Hermione asked as soon as Harry exited the room.

"He wanted to know if I could lend the Muggle Studies professor some books."

"Did he tell you why?"

"He said that they don't have a lot of recent books about muggles. I guess their books don't even get into the nineteen hundreds."

"Maybe," Hermione shrugged.

The group walked into the Great Hall and sat down at the Gryffindor table. All of their friends from the morning joined them soon after. Harry was glad that he had his friends surrounding him for lunch. Otherwise, he would have been too preoccupied trying to figure out who attacked him. Lunch proceeded normally with some late mail

being delivered. Once lunch was over the groups once again parted for their respective classes. Blaise and Daphne accompanied Harry, Hermione, and Neville towards their DADA class.

Harry was greeted to an overpowering smell of garlic when he entered the DADA room. He coughed a bit as he found a seat near the front of the class. He spotted Professor Quirrell sitting at the front of the class with his head in his hands. Harry looked closer and saw, through a small space in between his hands, that Quirrell was muttering to himself.

"Harry, scoot down so that we can sit here too." Hermione's voice brought Harry out of his musings.

"Oh, sorry about that," Harry quickly moved down to the other end of the row allowing Hermione and Neville to sit down. Blaise and Daphne sat down behind the trio. Daphne introduced her friend Tracy to Harry. Before Harry could introduce himself to Tracy, Professor Quirrell got the students' attention.

To say Professor Quirrell was skittish was an understatement. He could barely finish a sentence. Every other word was either stuttered or forced out. He seemed perpetually scared. He even jumped back when a student sneezed. Harry wondered what could have frightened the man so much that he was afraid of children. Harry was once more lost in his own thought, once again being saved by Hermione. Harry quickly shook his head to clear the cobwebs just in time to hear the end of Professor Quirrell's speech.

"... will b-be learning how to d-d-defend against a... an attacker, as w-well as retaliating." Professor Quirrell looked like he was about to pass out. Rather than explain everything, he waved his wand towards the blackboard behind him to write out instructions. Even the chalk seemed hesitant.

The class was ordered to pair off in two's and practice a defense spell called Protego, and an attack spell called Stupefy. The wand movements and pronunciation were illustrated on the board as well. Harry partnered up with Hermione, Neville with Blaise, and Daphne with Tracy. Professor Quirrell waved his wand once more. This caused the tables and chairs to vanish, leaving the wide open classroom to practice.

"This seems a little odd, don't you think?" Harry whispered to Hermione as they found a small area to practice in.

"I'm not sure. This is my first class in Defense Against the Dark Arts."

"Shouldn't we have read up on the spells first? You could get seriously hurt if..."

Harry was suddenly cut off by the sound of a body hitting a wall. He quickly looked up and saw Ron, unconscious, lying limply at the bottom of the wall. His partner, a boy named Seamus Finnigan, had smoke coming from the end of his wand, as well as a blackened face.

Harry sighed as he continued where he left off, "If you don't know what you're doing."

Harry and Hermione decided to sit in the corner reading up on the spells instead of trying to cast them first. The rest of their small group quickly joined in, not wanting to share the same fate as Ron. Ron was now sporting a large welt on the back of his head. He was being dragged to Madam Pomfrey by his partner. Apparently, Seamus accidentally cast the wrong spell. This became evident when Ron's hair started to fall off.

The group continued in their books for the first quarter of the class. Harry glanced over at Professor Quirrell from time to time. He looked as if he had been stunned, his eyes were glazed over, and there was a little bit of drool coming from the corner of his mouth. Harry was starting to worry about him. That is until Professor Quirrell jerked awake and wiped the drool from his face.

"Okay, I'm starting to seriously think that there are a couple of screws loose in Professor Quirrell's head."

"I would too if I had a vampire threaten to kill me." Neville said as he looked up from his book.

"I guess you're right." Harry then closed his book and set it on the floor. He did a quick stretch before pulling out his wand. With a circular flourish in front of him and a commanded "Protego" Harry

attempted the defense spell. Attempt being the key word, nothing happened when Harry did this.

"You're not saying it right," Hermione interjected. "You need to put emphasis on the e not the o. Also, the wand movement is a semicircle not a full circle."

"But the book showed a circle." Harry opened his book once more to the page on Protego.

Hermione looked over his shoulder and pointed to the wand movement. "See it's only a semicircle."

"But, where did I see a full circle?"

"Probably here, where it's showing what the spell should look like in front of the wizard." Hermione pointed to the illustration that Harry used as reference.

"Oh," Harry looked a little embarrassed at this. "I guess I read too fast, and used the finished illustration as the casting reference."

"Well, try it now, now that you know."

Harry repeated the steps mentioned in the book and this time managed to form a dim looking shield of light in front of him.

"See, you ... sort of got it." Hermione smiled weakly at Harry.

"Maybe I did something wrong."

"Harry, relax, you did it right. You just need to focus on it."

"Yeah, I think you're right Hermione." Hermione just stared at Harry with a knowing look in her eyes. "Okay, I know that you're right."

"It's just because you've been having trouble concentrating today."

"Yeah, the potion that Madam Pomfrey gave me is starting to wear off."

"How much has it worn off?"

"Oh, not much really, it should last until I can get into my Zen compartment."

A few members of the group tilted their heads in confusion, "Zen compartment?"

"I never told you about my trunk, did I?"

"I saw a little bit of it on the train ride here, but you didn't go into detail." Hermione's brow furrowed as she remembered the library in Harry's trunk. Harry saw the looks of confusion on everyone else's faces.

"I have this special trunk. It's charmed to have seven compartments. Each compartment holds a different feature. One of them happens to be a place where I can go to escape everything. I call it my Zen compartment. It has a small transfigured forest complete with wind, river, and sky. There are a few runes in it to have a flowing stream, as well as a realistic breeze. The sky is charmed to look like a sunny or partly cloudy sky." Harry was met with stunned silence after his explanation, "What?"

"That must have been pretty expensive to have all that done to it."

"It's not about the money. I just wanted a place to get away from everything. Somewhere where there is no pressure of being The-Boy-Who-Lived. I just want to be Harry Potter. Does that make sense?"

"Harry, I'm sure that most of us here only see you as Harry Potter. While we do know about the fame behind your name, we really don't care about it." Hermione offered in a soothing voice. She then turned her head to the others, "Right?"

The answers she received weren't what she had hoped to receive. She was hoping they would instantly respond with similar answers. A few did, but some just gave hesitant nods. Harry saw this too, but decided to try and rectify the star struck image that he supposedly created.

"Look, I'm just Harry Potter. I have no idea what happened back then. All I do know is that my life sucked up until a year ago." Harry really needed to learn to stay quiet sometimes.

"What do you mean?" Blaise asked. His voice was monotonous with indifference. Harry liked Blaise because of this. He remembered his first meeting with the boy, how he acted a little nervous. It was most likely due to the fact of him being in unfamiliar territory.

"I'll tell you about it later. It's not anything I'm fond of." Harry's eyes glazed over as he remembered all of the horrible memories from the Dursleys. He quickly shook his head to get rid of the thoughts. "Let's just get back to practicing these spells."

The group nodded and returned to their books. Every so often one of them would put their books down and try to cast the spell. Hermione was the first one to learn both of the spells. They decided that, since Stupefy doesn't actually damage anything non-living, they would practice on the wall before trying it out on each other. Hermione was eager to help the others learn the spell as quick as she did. There were only twenty minutes left for class when the group finally got the spell down pat.

They re-partnered up and stood to face their partners. Three sets of voices shouted Stupefy only to be blocked by the other three with their Protego shields. They continued this for the next ten minutes before they switched for the remaining ten minutes. When the bell chimed for the end of class, the group gathered their things and headed out the door. They were glad when class ended. They were beginning to get a little winded, save for Harry who seemed to have a lot of energy to spare.

When the group entered the Great Hall, they noticed something different. Students were sitting with their friends regardless of house. Only the majority of Slytherins seemed to stay at their table. Harry was quite surprised to find out that all it took was a public display of unity to change this much. It was only a couple of people, who ventured forth between houses. Mostly first years, but Harry was willing to take what he could get. Harry noticed most of the professors smiling down at the students.

"I wonder why no one thought of doing this before." Harry said as the eight of them sat down at the end of the Gryffindor table. Harry sat with Hermione, Neville, and Daphne on one side, while Susan, Hannah, Tracy, and Blaise sat on the other.

"Harry, what's the big deal, inviting more Slytherins to sit at our table?" Ron asked from a few places down.

Harry sighed and placed his hands down on the table. He blatantly ignored the boy.

"Hey, Harry did you hear me?" Ron started to move down towards the group. When he got close enough he heard Harry counting under his breath. "Don't be like that Harry," Ron placed his hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Ronald, what are you doing?" Harry said, barely controlling his temper.

"I was asking you a question."

"Since when have I given you the idea that you could do so, let alone, the permission?" Harry slowly turned to face Ron. He saw the obviously fake wig that he was wearing due to the mishap in DADA. His anger instantly evaporated. He was now having trouble holding back his laughter, as were the rest of his friends.

"C'mon, I just want to be friends mate."

"Please leave me alone. I want to eat with my friends in peace." Harry turned back to his friends.

"Why do you want to be friends with Slytherins or that mud..." Ron was instantly cut off by a flurry of wand movements.

"Finish that sentence, and I will not be held accountable for what is done to you." Harry said nonchalantly, noting the seven wands pointing at Ron.

McGonagall was a welcome relief for Harry. "Mr. Weasley, what are you doing that has caused a number of students to point their wands at you?"

"I was simply trying to ask Harry a question."

"Harry, is this true?" McGonagall turned towards Harry, her face a tad grim.

"Partly true ma'am."

"Care to explain to me, the full story, then?"

"He did indeed come to originally ask a question. He presented himself as a friend, even though I have no wish to be his friend. He then insulted my friends from Slytherin house, and nearly insulted Hermione with a hateful word."

"Am I correct to believe it was the m-word?"

"You are," Harry said without any emotion.

McGonagall sighed as she rounded on Ron, "While I hate to do this to my own house, I feel that an example needs to be made. Ten points from Gryffindor and detention with me tonight. I can't believe I'm handing those out on the first day." Ron opened his mouth to protest but McGonagall instantly cut him off. "Shall I make it for a week? I think you should return to your seat and refrain from bothering Mr. Potter."

Ron stormed off to sit with Seamus and another Gryffindor named Dean Thomas. Harry sighed as he returned to his food, nearly losing his appetite. Why couldn't people just leave him alone?

"Are you alright Harry? You have barely touched your food." Hermione placed her hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Why is common sense so lacking in this place?"

"People learn from their mistakes." Blaise said as he set his pumpkin juice down. "Sometimes it takes longer for others."

"I suppose you're right."

"Harry, you need to eat. We have Potions tomorrow with Professor Snape. If he tries to attack your mind again, you'll need all the strength you can get."

"He didn't seem that bad when we had his class." Susan said as she refilled her goblet.

"That doesn't make sense," Fred or George decided to jump in on the conversation.

"He's always been really evil..."

"...making us do extra work..."

"...not giving us fair grades..."

"...handing out bogus detentions..."

"...taking away points for no reason."

"Fred, George, not right now." Harry was rubbing his temples to try and relieve the minor headache that was fast approaching.

"Sorry mate, we keep forgetting." The twins both said.

"Well, he didn't take points away from anyone unless it was deserved." Susan said.

"Yeah, and he didn't give out any detentions, not even when I accidentally spilled my boil cure potion on his robes. He just said 'Accidents happen'. He then cleaned up the spill but left what was still in my cauldron."

"That's really odd." Harry said. "Although, I didn't try to dive into his mind when he attacked me, it's possible that he's not that bad of a person."

"Trust us Harry, he's as bad as they come." Fred said as he got up to head to the Gryffindor common room.

"Hey Fred c'mere a minute," Harry waved him over.

"What's up Harry?" Fred and George walked over to where Harry was sitting.

"Do you guys know a lot about the castle?"

Fred and George looked at each other, and then back at Harry. "We know our fair share." Fred was doing the talking for the both of them.

"I want to ask you a few questions, but not here."

"Do you have another place in mind?"

"We can use my common room. The password is," Harry waved them down to get closer to them before he whispered, "Amicus." He then looked at all of his new friends at the table. "The same goes for all of you. If you ever find yourself out in the corridors and it's almost curfew, just head to my common room. I'll let you bunk up with me for the night in there." Harry looked around to make sure no one was looking. "The password to my dorm is Amicus. You can use it any time you want."

His friends nodded to him in understanding. Harry then said goodbye to Fred and George as they headed out of the Great Hall. Harry turned back to his food when he got this weird feeling in the pit of his stomach. He looked up towards the head table where he saw Dumbledore staring at his group and smiling. As soon as Harry saw him, the smile vanished.

"Crap," Harry dropped his fork and knife onto the table and ran out of the Great Hall, his friends followed closely behind him.

"Harry what's wrong?" Hermione said as she neared him.

Harry didn't turn his head as he responded to Hermione. "I think the Headmaster just read all of your minds. He knows the password to my dorms."

"What can we do?"

"I don't know, but I'm going to ask Godric if he can help."

It only took a few minutes of sprinting for Harry to reach his common room. A few of his friends kept up to him while others fell behind. Harry didn't like the fact that he couldn't wait for them. There were just too many precious items in his room to let the Headmaster near them.

"Godric I need your help!" Harry said, near out of breath from running up seven flights of stairs.

"What seems to be the matter Harry?"

"Did Dumbledore come here yet?"

"No, he didn't. Why do you ask?"

"He knows my password. Is there any way to change it?"

"Even if I do, he'll just use the same method he used to find out your password again."

Harry spat out a curse as the rest of his friends caught up to him.

"Harry, language," Hermione said in between breaths. She wiped her sweat-laden bangs out of her face.

"Sorry Hermione," Harry said contritely. "Godric, is there any way to only permit access based on who the person is?"

"I suppose, but there would be ways to bypass it."

"Hermione, is there anything that is unique to a specific witch or wizard that can not be altered via potion or spell?" Harry spun around towards Hermione.

Hermione took a few seconds to catch her breath before she responded. "Well, their core is unique to them. Nothing can change that, no spell or potion that I know of can change it."

"Godric, can you sense magical cores?" Harry turned back to Godric.

"I can, but I need to be near the person in order to do so."

"Alright, we'll place our hands on your painting in order for you to register our cores."

Godric nodded as the eight teens placed their hands on his painting. After a soft white glow, the teens removed their hands.

"Add Fred and George Weasley to that list when they show up."

"They are already inside Harry. However, I can still sense their cores, so I will add them now."

"Aunt Minnie too if you could," Harry said hurriedly.

"As you wish."

When all was finally done, and the adrenaline left Harry's body, he slumped down to the floor. "Thank Merlin, I was quick enough."

"What's so important in your common room that you want to deny access to Dumbledore?" Blaise asked.

"My parents are in there." Harry said flatly.

"I thought that they died," Susan said before covering her mouth. "I'm so sorry. I wasn't thinking when I said that."

"No, you're right Susan. They did die, but their memories live on in my Pensieve."

"You have a Pensieve?" Susan asked in shock.

"Yeah, I got it from my parents' vault. Why, are they rare?"

"They're extremely rare. Yours is the only one I know of. My aunt constantly tells me that she wishes she could have one. It would make trials go so much easier for her if she could just view their memories."

"Why are they so rare?" Hermione asked.

"Pensieves are rare because the process to create one takes roughly a year to complete. Now, with that answered, perhaps you should head inside, it is rather chilly." Godric said.

"I think you're right." Harry said as he got up to head into his common room.

Inside, Harry found the sitting area was much larger than before. There were now twice as many couches as before. The fireplace had also enlarged. Fred and George looked up from a large piece of parchment when they heard the teens enter. They quickly tapped it with their wands and muttered something under their breath before looking back towards them. Then they noticed the room had enlarged around them.

"Wasn't the room smaller when we got here?"

"Why yes it was dear brother."

"Do you know how it got so large?"

"Perhaps this is the fabled room that we've been looking for."

"What room?" Harry asked, interrupting their banter.

"They probably speak of the room of requirements." Rowena said from Godric's inner painting.

"You know where it is?" Fred asked eagerly.

"Yes," Rowena nodded as she said this.

"Can you show us where it is?" George asked.

"Yes," another nod.

Fred and George were silent for a while before they both asked.
"Will you show us where it is?"

"Maybe," Rowena said this with a chuckle. "I have no reason to show you, other than the fact that you wish to know where it is."

"It would really help us with our pranks."

"Did someone say pranks?" Salazar came into the picture frame as well.

"Of course, we are this generations Marauders." Fred and George said proudly.

"Marauders," Harry said as he walked over to Fred and George.
"Where did you hear that word?"

Fred and George both looked at each other quickly before looking back towards Harry. "We shan't say nothing if you don't say please."

Harry knew where this was going so he smiled before he responded. "Please," Harry paused for a second. He then continued before the twins could speak. "Please, tell me where you heard that word."

Both twins were in the process of shouting the word 'nothing' when Harry said the next sentence. They quickly shut their mouths, but the released air made a raspberry sound as it exited them.

"I think he just pulled one over on us."

"That he did dear brother that he did."

"We first heard of the Marauders when we found a certain map in Filch's office." Fred said as he pulled out a small folded up piece of parchment.

"That's my dad's map," Harry exclaimed as he made to grab it, but Fred was too quick.

"Prove it," George said with a wary eye.

"My father's Marauder name was Prongs. His friends were Moony, Padfoot, and Wormtail. You activate the map by saying 'I solemnly swear that I am up to no good'. In order to deactivate the map, you need to say 'Mischief managed'."

"He knows all our secrets dear brother."

"Not all of them, just the important ones."

"By the way, what are your Marauder names?" Harry asked the two as he folded his arms.

"Um... we haven't decided yet." Fred said as he handed Harry the map.

"Tell you what. You come up with some good Marauder names for all of us here, and I'll let you continue using the map."

"You have yourself a deal Mr. Potter." Fred said as he and George stuck out their hands.

"It's just Harry guys." Harry stuck the map into his robe pocket before shaking both their hands.

"Right, now that that's settled. We really need to get back to our dorms. We have experimenting to do."

"Why leave, I can give you guys a lab to work in if you want." Harry pointed towards a door that started to stretch out of the wall. The twins suddenly got really cuddly and friendly with Harry.

"Already he's giving us presents."

"He hasn't even taken us out to dinner yet."

"He does have the sweet talking down though."

"We might have to marry him."

"Uh, guys, thanks would be fine." Harry said as he backed away from Fred and George.

"Thanks," Fred and George said as they dashed off into the lab that Harry created for them.

Harry rubbed his temples once more. "Okay, I think I'm ready for some downtime." He turned to his friends. "You want to join me?"

With some nods, Harry led his friends into his room. Hedwig was sitting on her perch and lightly dozing. Her presence already made some of the pressures of the day lift from Harry's shoulders. He took the key for his chest off his necklace and opened up the sixth compartment. He lifted the trunk's lid and pulled out the walls to reveal a set of stairs leading to a wooden door covered in ivy. He led his friends into his trunk and into the small clearing of the forest.

The sight was amazing. They were instantly assaulted with the sounds of birds and a babbling brook. The scent of wildflowers filled the air. The ground felt incredibly real. The grass was crisp, as if a gentle rain was almost finished drying. The dirt beneath the grass was warm as was the sun overhead. A gentle breeze blew through the meadow causing the trees to sound as if they were whispering. The sight was incredibly beautiful and drew the breaths of all who entered.

Harry immediately sat down and folded his legs Indian style. He then started his breathing exercises. The others somewhat followed suit. They all delved into a state of serene calmness. Their minds cleared and their bodies relaxed. Harry used his time rebuilding the defenses of his mind and reorganizing his thoughts. It was a few hours before he finished. He found the girls were lying down on the soft grass lightly dozing. Harry quietly got Blaise and Neville's attention.

"Hey guys, can you help me get these girls into some beds?"

Neville and Blaise looked around and saw the dozing girls. They were also tired after their meditation. They nodded and lightly shook them awake. The girls mumbled incoherently at being disturbed. Blaise supported Daphne and Tracy, while Neville supported Hanna and Susan up into Harry's common room. Harry bent down and picked up a sleeping Hermione.

"Harry, what are you doing in my room?" Hermione said groggily as she grabbed a hold of his robe.

"Shh, I'm taking you to a bed. You fell asleep while meditating."

"Okay, just make sure you get my homework. I think I left it in Defense Against the Dark Arts."

"Alright Hermione, I'll make sure I grab it before I go to bed." Harry smiled at Hermione's sleeping figure as he exited his trunk. Blaise and Neville were waiting for him in his room. "Follow me guys." Harry said quietly.

Blaise had his arms around the two Slytherins, their heads resting on his shoulders. Neville looked shocked and embarrassed at having Hannah and Susan wrapping their arms around him, thinking he was a body pillow. As soon as they exited Harry's room and were in the common room, Harry wished for more rooms for everyone to sleep in. The single door turned into three. Each door had a coat of arms above them, one for each house.

"I created rooms for you two as well. It's way past curfew." Harry said to the two boys.

"I'll take them to their beds," Blaise said as the door to the Slytherin rooms opened for him.

"I'll drop these two off. I'll see you tomorrow Harry." Neville exited through the Hufflepuff's door.

Harry then headed towards the Gryffindor door. The door opened for him, allowing him access. He walked into what looked like a short hallway. There were two doors in this hall. One led to Neville's room, while the other led to Hermione's room. Harry walked through the latter.

"Harry, there's a rabbit eating my homework." Hermione mumbled as she snuggled into him.

"I'll chase it off for you."

"Make sure to give it the carrot or it'll bring friends."

Harry smiled once more as he placed Hermione on her bed. "I already gave them the carrot Hermione. They won't come back for awhile." Harry then pulled the bed sheets over Hermione.

Hermione rolled over onto her side as she grabbed the edges of her pillow. She then mumbled something about pudding before Harry left the room. He walked out in time to see Neville entering his room looking rather disheveled.

"Have fun today Neville?"

"I think I'm beginning to like hanging out with you Harry."

"Only beginning to like?" Harry asked.

"Okay, I already do, but today was nice too."

"Goodnight Neville, I'll see you tomorrow."

"Goodnight Harry."

Harry then exited the hall and made the slow trek to his bedroom. When he entered, he haphazardly tossed his clothes off. He closed his trunk and opened it to his clothes compartment. He summoned a

pair of pants and slid them on. He then plopped down on his bed and quickly fell asleep, neglecting his covers.

(A/N) Good lord that was a lot of typing. There were a few reasons why this took so long. Most of the scenes didn't look right to me so I rewrote them. Then I lost my thumbstick that has all of this on it. I found it a few days back and quickly finished the chapter. I hope you like it. I was talking with a friend of mine on how to handle Snape in this story. Trust me, you might be surprised. I haven't seen this done in any fanfic that I've read. One thing though, I know a lot of you say that you would drop this story if Harry had a harem or if it wasn't a pure Harry/Hermione fic. I recently got into Lunar Harmony (Harry/Hermione/Luna) pairings. I was wondering about your thoughts on that, if you wanted me to try and incorporate that into the story or not. Either way I have plans for this for awhile. I will try not to take so long between chapters. The weekly release dates will try and be upheld. Also, I keep forgetting to ask. I changed the sorting hat's song in chapter 10 to something I made up. I wanted to know what you thought of it. Anyways, this is Kunaiswarm signing off. Ciao

(A/N): Wow, I was surprised by the volume of feedback on my last question. I had planned on Lunar Harmony, but I got to thinking. Why can't Luna just be as good a friend as all the others? She could still be really close to Harry as in a little sister type deal. He can get the balance of 'head in the clouds' and 'down to earth' from both girls. Doesn't necessarily have to be a harem to get that accomplished. Anyways, thanks for the feedback. One reader, shadeirion, asked about Harry buying a ton of books back in chapter 7. He did this because he wanted to read them while at Hogwarts. He knew he was going to go to some school eventually and he didn't want to chance the library not having those books. Also, the deal about the headache after Moldyshort's attack giving him a headache. It was never actually said it was Legilimency, only that it seemed like it. There is a reason for the chronic headaches in the first year. I'll explain that by the end, nothing will be revealed yet. Foreshadowing, it does have to do with ol' Snake Eyes. Besides, if it were a Legilimency attack, Harry has a large immovable object as a shield. Though this is there, it's like asking a five year old to drive a tank. Sure, out of a hundred shots they might hit the target but the other ninety nine miss. It's like rolling a D20, you don't always get a critical hit. Other than these two issues, nothing really major on the lines of questions. Thanks for all the reviews, and thank you for the questions shadeirion. On with the show.

P.S. Disclaimer. I don't own Harry Potter, Hermione does. At least that's what I strongly believe. His universe is owned by J. K. Rowling. She is my BAMF of the day ... every day.

P.P.S. I changed chapter 3 today. I've changed the Heirs around a bit. James is now both Godric's and Merlin's heir. Lily is no longer an heir and is no longer pureblood. Sorry for all the confusion and the unintentional change in blood status. I know she was badass as a muggleborn. I apologize for making her a pureblood.

Ron Weasley was not having a good time at Hogwarts so far. He was supposed to have been Harry's best friend. He was supposed to see Harry before he even got on the train. He was supposed to be his only link into the magical world, not Neville Longbottom. Harry was supposed to be his friend and his alone. Those other people that hung out with Harry would have to go.

Ron was pacing around the first year's dormitories in anger. He was wearing out the carpet underneath him with his incessant pacing.

Occasionally, he would sit down on his four-poster bed and try to think where everything went wrong. That proved to be too difficult for the red haired boy. He grabbed one of his pillows and threw it across the room. It bounced off the wall and landed on, what was supposed to be, Harry's bed. He scowled in disgust as he walked over to Harry's bed to retrieve his pillow. Why wasn't anything going right for the red haired boy?

Ron was halfway back to his bed when an owl flew through an open window nearby. This was a strange occurrence. Usually owls delivered their mail in the mornings with all the others. Ron dropped his pillow back onto his bed and went over to the owl. He untied the letter from the owl's outstretched leg. Once done, the owl flew off into the night. Ron settled down onto his bed and tore the seal off the letter. His eyes scrunched up as he started to read the short missive. Apparently, Professor McGonagall's detention was canceled. He was now expected to spend the remainder of the evening with Headmaster Dumbledore.

Ron was outright confused now. Why did Headmaster Dumbledore need to see him? Surely, his outburst wasn't going to get him expelled. He thought over all the possible reasons as to why the headmaster would need to see him. That didn't take long. His brain wasn't the concentrating type. He quickly lost focus. He decided that he might as well get his new detention over with as soon as possible.

Ron sighed as he walked out of his dorm room and down the winding stairs to the Gryffindor common room. The common room was almost devoid of students. They had most likely all gone to bed already. The fire, on one side of the room, was still going. Some students were crowding around it, trying to get their homework done early. Most of the red chintz chairs were empty. He exited the common room through the portrait of someone known as The Fat Lady.

Ron slowly walked down the halls towards Dumbledore's office. His footsteps echoed throughout the deserted halls. The people in the portraits scoffed at the boy for interrupting them as they were trying to go to sleep. Ron quietly apologized to just about every painting he passed. His mind was elsewhere as he neared the gargoyles blocking headmaster's office.

The two gargoyles looked at each other before turning their gaze back to Ron. One of the gargoyles leaned onto the wall behind him as he waited for the password. The other was laughing quietly. The two gargoyles could best be personified as being the two sides of the same coin. One was stern, serious, and intelligent. The other couldn't be taken seriously even if your life depended on it. He was always joking around. He never accepted passwords, even if they were correct. It was always left to his 'brother' to keep him in line.

"Um, I have a note to see Dumbledore," Ron said nervously.

The gargoyle on Ron's right raised an eyebrow in confusion.

"Professor Dumbledore," Ron corrected himself hastily.

The gargoyle on Ron's right nodded slowly as he stepped to the side. His brother just started to laugh loudly as he sidestepped in front of the door. The serious gargoyle unclasped his trident and prodded his brother with it a few times. Eventually the jokester gargoyle received the hint. He begrudgingly moved away from the door, allowing Ron passage.

Ron stammered his thanks as he walked into the very small circular room behind the gargoyles. It only took a couple of seconds for Ron to get a good view of the room, if it could be called that. The room was about four to five feet in diameter, and devoid of all but a single column that jutted upwards. Ron turned back around to see the gargoyles had blocked the exit to the room. He was about to ask them if this was some sort of joke when stone steps started to slide up the column. Ron stepped onto one of the steps. He then started to rise up towards the top, all the while, spinning around in a tight circle around the column. He shut his eyes after he started to get a little dizzy.

Suddenly the stairs stopped and he fell forward. He opened his eyes to see that he fell onto a thin red carpet. He stood up and rubbed his nose to try and relieve the pain from it. He looked around the room that he was now standing in. It was roughly three times the size of the previous room. The walls were lined with bookcases filled with books. There were a few reading chairs strewn about the room. Each chair came with a side table and a small, rune powered, reading light.

Ron then noticed the set of oak doors at the other end of the long red carpet. He slowly walked over to it. He gulped nervously as he extended his hand to knock on the door. Before his hand hit the wood, the door opened with an ominous creak. Ron poked his head inside the office. He looked around the room, but did not see the headmaster anywhere. Feeling a little safer at the absence of the headmaster, Ron walked into the room. As soon as he did, the door slammed shut behind him. He turned around and tried the handle, only to realize that the door was locked.

Ron gulped nervously once more as he turned around. When he did, he saw Dumbledore sitting at his chair. Ron jumped backwards into the door in fright. How was that possible? The chair was empty a few seconds ago. Ron quickly looked around and saw no door that the headmaster could have come from. Dumbledore waved his hand towards an empty chair in front of him. He clearly wanted Ron to sit down in the chair. He made it clear that it wasn't an offer. It was an order.

Dumbledore did not look like the kindly grandfather that he always seemed to portray. His face was locked in a permanent scowl. His pointed Phrygian cap was lopsided and looked as if it had a hole in it. Ron would have pointed this out if he were not completely terrified of the headmaster right now. The silence that filled the room was deafening. Dumbledore just stared at the boy, never once did he blink. Ron tried with all his might to avert his eyes from the headmaster's gaze, all to no avail. Ron felt like a mouse in front of a cat known as Albus Dumbledore.

"Explain yourself," Albus said, his voice monotone and devoid of emotion.

Ron shook his head in confusion. He had no idea why he was in trouble with the headmaster.

"That incident a few hours ago with the Granger girl," Albus explained.

"You told me to try and break them up." Ron tried to defend himself. All he could manage was a squeaked sentence.

"I told you to try and become Harry's friend." Albus said as he sighed. "I did not mention anything about using that word."

"But I thought," Ron stammered out, only to be interrupted by Dumbledore.

"That's exactly the problem," Albus stated, "You don't get to think."

Ron shrank into his chair. Albus knew how he wanted the plan to be carried out. He couldn't have some kid muck it up because of thoughts of fame, glory, and riches.

"I'll try harder next time." Ron said shyly.

"I'm not even sure if there should be a next time." Albus said as he folded his hands on top of his desk. He considered Obliviating the boy. This way he could try with someone new and not have to worry about leaving around any evidence with the youngest male Weasley.

Ron slowly nodded his head, never once could he break his gaze from Dumbledore's eyes. He shrank a little more into his chair, trying to make himself appear smaller. He did this in hopes that Albus would forget he was there. Clearly, the boy wasn't that intelligent. It's hard to shrink away from someone if you are the only two people in the room. Ron thought up a thousand possible excuses to tell Albus, every excuse appearing more implausible than the last. How was he going to get out of this mess unscathed?

"What do you want me to do?" Ron asked, barely above a whisper. His face was beginning to match the color of his hair.

"I want you to separate Harry from his rag tag group of misfits. They are disrupting my plans." Albus said in an exasperated tone. He wondered how many times he would have to repeat this to the boy before the idea sunk in.

"How do you want me to do that?" Ron asked.

Albus was almost ready to strangle the boy. Sometimes being too smart left you wondering why others were so inept. "Try and become his friend. Be nice to him, as well as his friends. If you are rude and crass then you will not go far."

"Okay, but the stakes are higher now that it will be harder to do." Ron stated, finding a little bravery.

Albus was briefly taken aback. Maybe the boy wasn't as stupid as he looked. "Name your price," Albus replied.

"I want ten percent of his gold." Ron said. "I also want," He scrunched up his face in thought. "I also want Hermione. She looks like she could be useful for when I'm older." Ron folded his arms together.

Albus closed his eyes as he rubbed the bridge of his nose. Maybe he spoke too soon of the boy's intelligence. What could the boy possibly want with the Granger girl? He's only eleven years old. He probably wants her so that she can do housework or something. Certainly, the boy couldn't be delving into the darker realms of thought, the more bestial senses. Albus wondered if he could cast a compulsion charm on the boy to have him lower the stakes. He quickly rid himself of the idea. His family was too close to him to notice the change in his behavior.

"Deal," Albus said as he curtly nodded his head.

Ron smiled, figuring he pulled the wool over the headmaster. He didn't realize just how much he was being played by Dumbledore. You couldn't deceive someone unless you were on a somewhat level playing field. Albus was standing at the top of a tower with a cauldron of boiling tar. Ron was standing at the bottom of the tower with a wicker shield. The scene played out with Dumbledore laughing over a burnt and blistered body of a dead red head. If Ron saw the image play through the headmaster's mind, he would have wet himself.

"Can I go now?" Ron asked hesitantly. "Or was there more to this detention?"

"Detention, what do you mean, detention?" Albus asked.

"The letter you sent me said that my detention with Professor McGonagall was canceled." Ron said.

"It said no such thing. It only stated that instead of your detention with Professor McGonagall, you would be visiting me." Albus said cheekily. "You still have your detention with her tomorrow night."

Ron looked as if he was going to start complaining, but thought better of it. He didn't want to get on the headmaster's bad side. He nodded slowly. He then turned and headed towards the door. He tried the handle but it was still locked. He turned to the headmaster and gave him an imploring look.

"Do you understand your part of this bargain?" Albus asked.

"Yes sir, I'll do my best to separate Harry from his friends." Ron stated.

"Good," Albus nodded.

Albus waved his hand towards the door. Ron heard a light click come from the handle. He turned the handle and opened the door. He quickly walked out of the headmaster's office. He ran down the spiral staircase and out of the circular room. He then ran as fast as he could back to the Gryffindor common room, disturbing paintings as he went.

Back in Albus' office, Albus sat back in his chair with his hands folded under his chin. He shook his head somberly towards the spot where Ron had stood. He then turned towards his phoenix. The majestic creature turned towards Dumbledore with sorrow-filled eyes. This phoenix was different in two ways to Harry's phoenix. Dumbledore's phoenix was red and gold. The second difference, he was not happy with his current companion.

"Fawkes, whatever shall I do to keep my plan going the way it should?" Albus asked the bird.

The bird trilled lightly at the headmaster's question. Dumbledore, at one time, had been able to understand his familiar. He enjoyed his long conversations with Fawkes. However, at one point, sometime during the war with Voldemort, He started to miss a few things. It gradually turned to whole sentences. Eventually, he could no longer understand his familiar's words. It worried him at first, but he decided he didn't need to understand the creature's words to get him to obey his commands. Dumbledore was one of the few remaining people who knew any amount of knowledge pertaining to a phoenix. However, that did not mean he knew everything. Once a phoenix stops talking to it's companion, it means it has lost all trust in you.

True lore of phoenixes was lost to the ages. The last few remaining tomes of them were locked away in a secret place, Dumbledore's private library. He was the last person alive that knew a substantial amount about a phoenix. However, that didn't really amount to much. The last three tomes that Dumbledore carried only explained what a phoenix is, how to bond them to you, and how to set them free. Dumbledore contemplated whether he should or shouldn't destroy the last tome. If he did, no one would know how to destroy his bond to his phoenix. He truly did love the advantages of having a phoenix. The downsides losing his bond with Fawkes were far too great to lose. Dumbledore had started to misinterpret his phoenix.

"Yes, I do believe that I was correct with the Weasley boy." Dumbledore nodded. "It is nice to know you feel the same way old friend." He smiled as he gently pet his familiar.

Fawkes trilled sadly at his companion's touch. Once a phoenix lost faith in his or her companion, they lost some of their mythical abilities. Their tears still had incredible healing powers, but their song or touch could no longer bring joy to those around them. Fawkes was like a car with a flat tire. It can still run, but it isn't very fast and needs to be fixed.

"I think that shall do for the night dear friend." Albus said as he rose from his chair. "I believe I shall turn in for the night." He smiled and exited through a hidden doorway inside of a row of bookcases.

When the door closed, Fawkes turned his head to a closed window. He looked out towards the waning moon with sorrow-filled eyes. He trilled lowly one last time before he tucked his head under his wing, a single tear falling from him to the floor. Fawkes was saddened by his lack of faith in his companion. He was also very lonely. Dumbledore wouldn't let Fawkes out of the castle unless on a specific mission. Conversing with the other aviary creatures of Hogwarts wasn't a terribly important mission for him.

When the sun breached the treetops of the Forbidden Forest, Harry was just exiting the shower. He had finished with his morning exercises rather quickly. He dressed quickly and headed down to his common room. He saw a few people lounging around reading or conversing. He smiled and waved at his friends as they noticed him come down the stairs to his room.

"Looks like all we're missing now is Hermione." Daphne said as Harry walked over to the group.

"I'll go get her." Harry said as he started to walk towards the door for Gryffindors.

"Oh," Daphne said with raised eyebrows. "Don't try anything cheeky now."

"I'm just going to wake her up," Harry said as his face reddened, "Nothing more."

"Right, right," Daphne said as everyone started to laugh at Harry's predicament.

"Oh ha ha," Harry said as he smiled and continued towards the Gryffindor door.

Harry entered the short hallway and gently knocked on Hermione's door. He called out her name but didn't get an answer. He knocked one more time but still received no answer. Wondering if Hermione was just sleeping in, he turned the doorknob and entered her room. He walked over to the bed to find her nibbling on the corner of her pillow. Harry smiled as he bent down close to Hermione.

"Hermione, wake up." He whispered into her ear.

"Mm, not now, eating," Hermione mumbled as she waved Harry off.

"Hermione, I don't think your pillow counts as a complete breakfast." Harry said.

"It's chicken," Hermione mumbled as she continued to nibble on her pillow.

"Hermione, I know your pillow has feathers in it, but I don't think it's a chicken." Harry said as he chuckled to himself. "Now, you can wake up or," Harry said as he bent down closer to her. "I can pick you up and drag you out of bed." Harry then slid his arms under Hermione and lifted her out of bed. This woke Hermione up quite quickly.

"Harry, what are you doing?" Hermione asked as she registered her surroundings.

"If I didn't get you out of bed, you would have eaten your pillow." Harry said as he set her down on her feet.

"I wasn't," Hermione began. She stopped when she remembered her dream, "Oh."

"So, get ready and meet us in the common room." Harry said. "Well go down to breakfast together. There won't be chicken, but you can eat their eggs."

"Right," Hermione nodded as she blushed.

"I promise I won't tell anybody that you like to eat pillows." Harry said as he turned to leave the room.

"Harry Potter, I do not eat pillows." Hermione said as she threw her pillow at Harry.

"Okay, sorry, I was only joking." Harry said quickly as he recovered from being hit by the pillow. He turned around to see Hermione laughing at him. For a second there he thought Hermione was angry with him. Relieved that she wasn't, Harry smiled and left the room.

"Boys," Hermione muttered as she headed to the adjoining bathroom to take a shower.

Harry entered the common room a few seconds after leaving Hermione's room. When he entered, everyone looked up to him.

"Oh, she'll be ready in a few minutes." Harry said.

"That sure took quite a while just to wake her up." Tracy said as Daphne giggled. Hannah and Susan joined in. Neville and Blaise shook their heads in mock accusation.

"I didn't," Harry tried to defend himself, but gave up as their giggles increased. "Oh I give up." Harry raised his hands in the air, admitting defeat.

Harry sat down on a free chair. He folded his arms across his chest and tried not to laugh at the others' stares. He would have failed had Hedwig not shown up. She flew in threw the open window, and

landed on the arm of the chair. Harry smiled as he lightly scratched under Hedwig's chin. Hedwig trilled happily at the attention, sending waves of joy throughout the room. After Harry stopped, she held out her leg so that he could take the letter tied to it.

"Thanks love," Harry said as he gently pet Hedwig. She trilled and left the room to join the owls in the owlry.

"What do you have there Harry?" Blaise asked.

"Letter from home," Harry said as he finished opening the letter.

He quietly read it to himself as the others returned to what they were doing before. He smiled and placed the letter in a pocket on the inside of his cloak. A few minutes later Hermione entered the common room. Her hair was still damp from the shower. Everyone said their good mornings as they stopped what they were doing. They all rose from their chairs and headed out of Harry's common room. They chatted lightly as they walked down to the Great Hall for breakfast. When they got there, they saw Ron standing outside the door looking a little nervous.

Harry stared at Ron as he walked towards the doors. Before they could enter, Ron stopped them. They all paused and turned towards Ron. Harry noticed him shift his feet quite often. In addition, every time he tried to speak, he just opened his mouth before pausing and closing it again. Harry sighed. He figured he would have to get the ball rolling for this interruption to go anywhere.

"What do you want Ron?" Harry asked. "We're kind of hungry here." He waved his hand back towards his friends.

"Right, sorry, I'll make this quick." Ron stammered out. "I'm sorry for everything that I've been doing since I met you." Ron looked down towards the floor. He hoped that Harry took his apology to heart. He didn't want them to see the smirk that he had.

Harry shook his head, "Not up to me to forgive you."

"What do you mean, not up to you?" Ron asked as he lifted his head.

Harry tilted his head to Hermione, "All of the things that you said or did was to her."

Ron looked from Harry to Hermione. "I'm sorry Hermione." Ron said as he bowed his head once more.

"Fine," Hermione said tacitly.

"Good," Ron said as he breathed a sigh of relief. "Does that mean I can hang out with you guys now?"

"No," Harry said as he turned towards the Great Hall doors.

"But, I said I was sorry." Ron said angrily. "What else do you want?"

"Nothing from you," Harry turned back to Ron with an angry look. "Everything that you have said or done to us has been wrong. How do I know you're not just faking this to get on my good side?" Harry noticed a slight change in expression. "Whatever the reason, I don't want to be your friend. Maybe you can find someone else to hang around with. I know there are a couple of other boys in our year group, go find them." Harry and his friends turned away from Ron and entered the Great Hall.

Harry sat down and pierced a bit of ham with his fork. He placed the ham on his plate and began to cut it viciously into small bits. He couldn't believe what Ron just tried to do. He noticed the expression on Ron's face for the short time that it was there. He looked as if he was just caught with his hand in the cookie jar. The nerve of Ron to fake an apology just to get on his good side, no matter, he would have nothing to do with Ron. He had friends that wanted to hang out with him just to hang out. They wanted to be friends with Harry Potter, not The-Boy-Who-Lived.

"Harry, I think you've cut your ham into small enough pieces." Hermione said as she placed a spoonful of eggs onto his plate. "You shouldn't get so riled up with the likes of him."

"He just wanted to be my friend to be associated with The-Boy-Who-Lived." Harry said as he placed his fork and knife down.

"Then he doesn't deserve your friendship." Neville said as he clapped his hand on Harry's back.

Harry smiled at his friends. He knew he shouldn't get so mad at Ron. He just couldn't help that the boy knew which buttons to press. He was halfway through his first plate of eggs and ham when he noticed a few people look up. He looked up as well to see the flock of owls dropping off mail to the students. One particularly large barn owl flew down to Harry. He took the newspaper from its beak and placed two Knuts into the small pouch attached to its leg. He noticed his other friends get a couple of things as well before he opened up the paper to read.

He was skimming over some of the articles when one caught his attention. Apparently, someone had decided to break into Gringotts a few days back. They succeeded in bypassing all the defenses and security in Gringotts just to leave empty handed. The vault that they broke into, vault 713, had been emptied out the day of the crime. The goblins weren't releasing any information about the crime. They valued their clients' secrecy about as much as they hated anyone trying to interfere in their work.

"Harry, what are you reading so intently?" Hermione asked.

"Huh," Harry turned towards Hermione. He saw a letter in her hand, probably from her parents. "Oh, I was just reading that Gringotts was broken into a few days back."

"I thought that place was impregnable." Blaise said.

Harry nodded his head before clearing his throat to read the article. "The crime was committed by dark witches or wizards unknown at this time. The vault in question, vault 713, had been emptied out previously that day by a patron whose name shall remain anonymous, as will the contents of the vault. It is unsure how the crime had occurred, and is currently being investigated by the goblins. The goblin nation assures their patrons that the occurrence will not happen a second time. They also state that any attempts to do so usually result in the death of the criminal." Harry finished, looking at his friends for their reactions.

"That's a little morbid," Hermione said as she placed her letter down.

"Well, goblins are a ruthless bunch," Neville said.

"The one's I've met seemed nice to me," Harry said as he rubbed his chin.

Neville shrugged his shoulders. "Might have been just a coincidence, there is a reason why every goblin carries a sword with them at all times. Gran says it's because they are always ready to go to war. I think it's just for protection."

"Hmm, I'll have to ask them about that next chance I get." Harry said thoughtfully.

"I wouldn't if I were you," Neville said quickly. "They've been known to attack people for less. A goblin treats people based on how they represent themselves. If you look weak, they will walk all over you. If you treat them with respect, they will treat you with respect."

"The only unfortunate part is, not a lot of people treat goblins with respect." Susan said.

Harry nodded his head as he placed his paper down. He remembered something along those lines being said to him. Griphook had said that not a lot of people treat the goblins with any form of kindness. Harry guessed it was because of how a lot of the purebloods in the magical community acted. He wondered why Griphook and Ragnok were so nice to him. No proud race would admit to being a lesser race to another race. Harry set it aside for another time. He would research the relation between goblins and humans. He would need to if he intended to live up to the goblin's prophecy.

"So, anyone get anything interesting in the mail?" Harry asked.

"Gran sent me a remembrall." Neville said, holding up a clear ball with a red cloud inside.

"What's a remembrall?" Harry asked.

"A remembrall is a small device that let's the holder know if he or she has forgotten something. The usually gray cloud will turn red if the holder has forgotten something." Hermione stated as if reading it directly from a book.

Harry looked back towards Neville. The cloud in his remembrall was crimson red.

"The only problem is, I can't remember what I've forgotten." Neville said sadly.

"It'll come back to you, don't worry." Harry said.

"Now what do we have here?" asked a snidely voice from behind Harry.

Harry turned to see Draco Malfoy walking towards Neville. He quickly snatched Neville's remembrall from his hand.

"Mr. Malfoy, is there some reason as to why you are bothering these students?" Professor McGonagall asked as she walked up to the group on her way to the staff table.

"I was just looking at his remembrall Professor," Draco said in his best brown nosing voice.

"Look with your eyes, not your hands." Professor McGonagall said as she retrieved the remembrall from Draco and handed it back to Neville.

Draco looked angrily at Professor McGonagall as she walked away from the group. He glared at Harry before walking back to his table. Harry returned his stare and continued after Draco had sat down at the Slytherin table. He broke his stare and returned to his food. Draco wasn't worth getting riled up over.

After the group finished breakfast, they parted ways for their classes that day. Harry, Hermione, and Neville went up to the second floor to their Transfiguration class. Once inside, they quickly found a group of seats near the front of class. When Harry sat down he noticed an orange tabby cat laying down on the professor's desk. The cat had weird markings around its eyes. It looked as if the cat was wearing square glasses. The cat swished its tale as it stared at Harry.

Harry then noticed the blackboard start to write out notes on its surface. He pulled out a roll of parchment and started to write the notes down. This proceeded for a few minutes, yet still there was no sign of Professor McGonagall. Harry was wondering if all he was

going to do this class was copy down notes. He glanced at the cat every now and then, just to see it looking around at everyone in the room. It was almost as if the cat was watching them to make sure they didn't do anything wrong.

Harry's attention was diverted to the rear of the class when Ron burst through the door. He bent over, placing his hands on his knees, as he tried to catch his breath. After doing so, he looked up and smiled when he saw that Professor McGonagall wasn't there yet. Ron wiped the sweat from his forehead as he walked over to an empty seat.

"Made it, just in time," Ron said.

Suddenly the cat that had been lounging on the desk jumped off. It transformed into Professor McGonagall in midair. Ron froze as he was about to take his seat. Professor McGonagall walked up to him with a stern look in her eyes.

"Mr. Weasley, care to tell me why you were late?" Professor McGonagall asked.

"I got lost on my way here." Ron quickly said.

"Did you not ask any of the portraits or ghosts for directions?"

Ron looked down, "No ma'am, I didn't think to do that."

"Very well, take your seat. Do not let it happen again." Professor McGonagall walked back up to the front of the room.

Ron sheepishly sat down in his chair. He saw Harry looking at him and gave him an angry glare in return. Harry cocked an eyebrow in confusion before turning to face Professor McGonagall.

"Transfiguration is a strict and precise art. There are no in between in my class. I will have no jokesters, nor will I have anything but your utmost attention. If you do not think you can follow these principles then I suggest you leave right now." She pointed towards the door. No one moved towards it so she continued. "In this class, you will learn the art of Transfiguration, or, in laymen's terms, turning one thing into something else." She turned around and, with a flick of her wand, changed her desk into a pig and back.

"When can we do that?" Ron asked. "Turning things into animals I mean."

"Not for a long time. Living Transfiguration on that scale is OWL level material." Professor McGonagall said as she sat down at her desk. "For those of you who have read into the books, can you tell me if my desk was a pig at first or a desk at first?" McGonagall asked.

Hermione's hand shot into the air. With Professor McGonagall's nod, she answered the question. "It is impossible to tell within a short period of time. It could have been either one. It would take until the spell would wear off for one to see the object in its original form. Either that, or a simple Finite would cancel the effect."

"Very good, five points to Gryffindor." McGonagall said. Hermione beamed. "That is very true. It is impossible to tell, within a short period, the true nature of any transfigured object. Depending on the magical reserves of the caster, a transfigured object can last either an hour or a few days. Nothing can be permanently transfigured."

"What about some of the things that are created out of thin air?" A Ravenclaw student asked as she raised her hand.

"Conjuration is slightly different than Transfiguration. It is more difficult to start out with nothing, some say it goes against the laws of nature. Magic can bend the laws to our will, but it cannot break them, one of the first forms of Transfiguration and Conjuration, called alchemy, used nature's laws as its foundation." Professor McGonagall said. "An excellent question, five points to Ravenclaw."

She then waved her wand, causing boxes of matchsticks to float over to each student. "For our first project, I want you to transfigure each of these matchsticks in the box into different colored needles. The first should be silver, as it is the easiest, then the rest into different colors. Lastly, I want you to transfigure the box into a metallic case for the needles. Bonus points if there are special designs on the boxes." She said as the boxes landed in front of each student. "You have until the end of class to turn as many matchsticks into needles."

The class pulled out their wands and repeated the wand movements that Professor McGonagall showed them, incantations were not usually needed for Transfiguration, but can help. The class started their attempts on their matchsticks. It was half an hour before Harry or Hermione had any success with their project. Harry had turned his matchstick into the first silver one. Hermione could only get a silver colored wood.

"What am I getting wrong?" Hermione asked as she leaned away from her project.

Harry peered over to Hermione's matchstick and shook his head. "What are you trying to do?"

"Trying to turn the matchstick into a needle," Hermione said.

"Why a matchstick though?"

Hermione looked at Harry as if he'd grown a second head. "Harry, we are turning matchsticks into needles. You realize this right?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, that's what Professor McGonagall said. I want to know why you are doing that."

"Because, Professor McGonagall asked us to," Hermione said this as if she was trying to explain it to a five-year-old.

"Maybe I'm not explaining this correctly." Harry sighed. "How difficult is it to turn a matchstick into a pin?"

"Pretty difficult, since no one else has done it yet." Hermione said as she looked around the room.

"How difficult is it to change a needle into a needle?" Harry asked.

"Harry you're not making any sense."

"If you want to change a matchstick into a needle you have to imagine the needle, not the matchstick turning into a needle. It might seem like that's what you have to do, but it's much easier to go about it the other way." Harry said.

"Visualize the end result, not the starting material?" Hermione asked.

"Now you're getting it." Harry smiled. "Go on, give it a go."

Hermione squared herself as she stared at her matchstick. Professor McGonagall had overheard their conversation and decided to see if Harry's advice would work. If it did, she could use that in her future classes. Hermione started to mutter to herself, "Needle to a needle, needle to a needle." This became her mantra as she flicked her wand. The matchstick in front of her seemed to melt into the form of a needle.

"It worked!" Hermione exclaimed as she turned and hugged Harry.

"I'm glad it did," Harry said as he patted her back.

The two of them separated immediately when they heard Professor McGonagall clear her throat. The two of them started to blush as they turned to Professor McGonagall. She smiled at the two of them.

"That was a good explanation of Transfiguration Mr. Potter." Professor McGonagall said. "Can I ask where you learned it from and if I could use it to teach my other classes?"

"Sure, you can use it for your other classes." Harry said as he ran his hand through his hair. "As for where I learned it," Harry smiled to himself. "My father taught it to me."

Harry heard Ron mutter something about being a glory hound.

"I couldn't quite catch that Ron," Harry said as he turned around. "Do you mind repeating that for me?"

"I said you were a glory hound." Ron said. He was angry that Harry wouldn't let him join his clique. He was done being the nice guy. He was going to force his group apart. "Why can't you just leave things alone?"

"You know, I've just about had it with you." Harry said as he rose from his chair. "Why are you always trying to pick fights with me? What is wrong with you that you need attention that badly?" Harry said vehemently. "For your information, my friend asked for help. I don't ignore my friends."

"Mr. Potter, please calm down and return to your seat." Professor McGonagall said as she laid her hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Sorry professor." Harry said as he sat back down.

Professor McGonagall was about to take points away because of Ron and Harry's outburst, but Ron opened his big mouth before she could act.

"I still think your parents are glad that they're dead. They don't have to deal with your fat head." Ron muttered, "Pathetic if you ask me."

"Ron, stop," Dean muttered. "He can hear you."

Ron turned towards Harry to see him clench his fists. He was shaking with how angry he was. He was ready to hex Ron into next week. Professor McGonagall beat him to the punch, verbally of course.

"Mr. Weasley," Professor McGonagall said angrily. "I will not tolerate you or anyone else tarnishing Lily and James' good names. They are, by far, the finest students I ever had the privilege to teach. Detention for the next week, and twenty points from Gryffindor," She yelled in an exasperated tone.

"Detention," Ron whined.

"Do you wish for it to be a month's worth of detention? You are treading on thin ice Mr. Weasley. I suggest you quit while you're behind." Professor McGonagall looked furious.

"That's not fair!" Ron yelled.

"Get out of my classroom this instant!" Professor McGonagall yelled back just as loud.

Ron snatched his things and stormed out of the room. Professor McGonagall stared at the closed door for quite awhile. She then turned and walked back to her desk. She eased into the chair with a sigh. She took off her glasses and rubbed the bridge of her nose. Everyone in the room was looking towards Professor McGonagall in concern.

"Professor," Harry said, to try and discern if she was okay. He didn't receive an answer. "Aunt Minnie," He tried in a softer tone.

Professor McGonagall looked up towards her class. She was close to tears as she put her glasses back on. "I believe I went too far." She said with a sigh.

Harry shook his head as he rose from his chair. He then turned to the class and walked in front of Professor McGonagall's desk. "Alright people, back to work. There's nothing to see here."

It was slow, but the students eventually returned to their projects. Every so often, a student would glance up towards the professor. Harry turned around to see Professor McGonagall holding a small picture frame. He could barely make out a couple holding a small baby from where he was standing. Harry smiled and returned to his seat. The class continued in silence for the remaining thirty minutes. Professor McGonagall stared at the picture for the remainder of the class. When the bell rang, signaling the next class, Harry walked up to her.

"Aunt Minnie, have you thought about my offer I made you?" He asked.

"Yes," Professor McGonagall smiled as she looked up at Harry. "I think I will take you up on that offer."

"Excellent," Harry smiled. "I'll come back to you with the date. I have to see if anyone else wants to see them as well."

"Very well, I wait with bated breath." She smiled as Harry turned to leave for his next class. He held up his hand in a backwards wave as he exited the class.

Professor McGonagall set down the portrait and dabbed her eyes with a handkerchief. "You both should be proud of Harry. He's turned into such a fine young man. A little mischievous and rash, but that will fade with age." She then looked at the image of James and smiled, "I hope."

Harry, Hermione, and Neville met up with Blaise, Daphne, and Tracy about halfway to the open field for their next class, Flying Lessons.

Harry told them about McGonagall's decision to join him on a visit with his parents. He soon developed a list of those wishing to join him, which included his friends as well. He would ask Hagrid if he wished to join them. He'll find out if the Charms professor would like to join as well. He remembered his mother was exceptional in his class. He might want to see her again.

When they entered the field, they saw a young woman with gray hair and hawk-like eyes standing between two rows of brooms. She wore tight clothes, probably to reduce wind resistance, and a pair of goggles sat above her eyes. She also had a pair of gloves wedged between her pants and a belt.

"Good morning class, my name is Rolanda Hooch. You will call me Madam Hooch whilst in class." Madam Hooch said as she surveyed her students. "Now that you know my name, good morning class."

"Good morning Madam Hooch," Said the class in unison.

"Right then, welcome to your first class in broomstick training. Go on then, step to the right of your brooms." Madam Hooch said. The class stepped up to the right of their brooms. "Now place your left hand above the broom, and give the command 'up'." Once again, the class followed her commands.

Harry looked down towards his broom and shouted the command. His broom shot straight up into his hand as if eager to fly. The sudden action caused him to wobble in his stance. The broom wanted to fly regardless if it had a rider or not. Harry looked over and saw Draco sneer as his broom slowly flew into his hand. Hermione was having a bit more trouble with her broom. She repeated the command but her broom just rolled around lazily.

"Having a bit of trouble there?" Harry asked as he leaned over to her.

"Honestly, I don't understand why I need to know how to fly a broomstick. It's not part of the curriculum. It doesn't count towards my passing grade." Hermione said hurriedly.

"Could it be that you're afraid of heights? Or maybe flying in general?" Harry said this quietly so no one else could hear. He noticed Hermione's face redden slightly.

"I never liked heights." Hermione said just as quietly.

"Relax, be assertive." Harry said. "That way your broom will follow your command."

"I don't really want to fly though." Hermione said.

"I won't let you fall," Harry placed his free hand on her shoulder. "I'll never let anything happen to you while you're on a broom," or off of one. Harry said the last part silently to himself.

"Up," Hermione yelled. Her broom shot straight up into her hands. She felt braver, knowing that Harry would be there to help her.

Some of the students couldn't get their brooms to fly into their hands, so they resorted to bending over to pick it up. One in particular, Ron Weasley, had his broom fly straight up into his face, nearly breaking his nose. He glared at Harry when he laughed. It was funny, in a Three Stooges sort of way.

"Right then, now that you've all got your brooms. I want you to slide your left leg over the handle and position yourself a little behind the middle of the broom." She demonstrated for the class. "Once done, I want you all to kick off lightly from the ground when I count to three." She held a whistle up to her lips. "Alright, one, two, three," She blew the whistle and twenty students flew up into the air a few feet.

Some of the students had to readjust their balance. For the most part however, everything went smoothly. Madam Hooch started to let them fly around freely for a short while. This was so the students could get a feel of how to control their broom. She gave them explicit instructions of no horseplay and no flying outside of the field. Harry stayed close to Hermione the entire time they were flying.

"Harry, I'm not sure about this." Hermione said as her grip on her broom tightened. They were a good fifteen to twenty feet above the ground.

"Relax Hermione, you're doing great." Harry said from her side. "Besides, I'm here to catch you."

"Thank you Harry." Hermione said. She looked towards Harry and saw Draco talking to Daphne. "Harry, what are they talking about? Daphne looks rather angry."

Harry looked over and saw Daphne and Draco talking. Draco looked rather smug and made some provocative gestures. Daphne looked utterly disgusted with the boy.

"Come on Daphne, it's not that hard." Draco said. "Just once will be fine."

"Draco, I've told you a hundred times already. I don't want to ... I can't even say it." Daphne turned her head away in disgust.

"You'll do it or you'll regret it." Draco ordered.

"Leave her alone Malfoy," Tracy flew over to the two of them.

"This is none of your business, Davis. Why don't you be a good girl and fly away." Draco then turned towards her. "Unless you wish to take her place, is that it?"

"You slimy cretin," Tracy muttered angrily.

"Fine then, have it your way." Draco turned back towards Daphne.

Tracy made a move to grab Draco. However, he was a little too fast for her. He swung the back of his broom around, smashing it into Tracy's side. She tried to grab the handle of her broom with her hands but it slipped through her fingers. Draco had unknowingly dragged them up to about fifty feet. Much higher than Madam Hooch would have liked, had Crabbe and Goyle not been distracting her.

"Tracy!" Harry yelled as he darted forward. He cursed the slow speed of the broom.

Tracy screamed as she plummeted towards the ground. Madam Hooch heard this and spun around to see her falling at a fatal speed. She also saw Harry in close pursuit. She mounted her broom and sped off to see if she could help. Harry was closing the gap slowly but surely. He extended out his hand and reached as far as he could towards Tracy. He managed to grasp the edge of her robes. He used his grip to slow her fall and hasten his. In one deft movement,

he swung underneath Tracy, placing her in his arms and onto the safety of his broom. Tracy had long since shut her eyes in panic, and was still screaming.

"Tracy!" Harry yelled to get her attention.

At once, she stopped and, opening her eyes, realized that she was no longer falling, "Harry?"

"Relax, I've got you," Harry said as he slowly drifted down to the ground. Tracy threw her arms around him and hugged him as tightly as she could.

"Thank you," Tracy said. "You saved my life."

"Don't worry about it," Harry said. "If it weren't for Malfoy, you would still be flying around on your broom."

Harry landed on the ground, followed shortly by Madam Hooch.

"What happened?" Madam Hooch demanded.

"Malfoy knocked her off her broom." Harry said as he extricated himself from Tracy's hug.

"I did no such thing," Draco said as he flew down. "I was merely having a conversation with Greengrass when she bumped into me. It's not my fault if she can't hold onto her broom."

"That's not true Malfoy and you know it." Harry yelled. "I saw you knock her off her broom."

"These brooms are old anyways," Draco said. "It could have been the broom's fault."

"You may be right Mr. Malfoy," Madam Hooch said. "I should make a request to the headmaster for some new brooms." She then turned her attention towards the remaining flyers. "Alright you lot, that's enough flying for the day. I want you all down here this instant."

The remaining flying students nodded their heads as they made their way back to the ground. Neville, on the other hand, started to drift slightly to the left. Suddenly his broom jerked, causing him to fall

off the back. He plummeted a few feet before his robe was caught on the outstretched sword of a stone statue. When the sword ripped through the robe, he fell the remaining few feet to the ground. He landed awkwardly on his side.

Madam Hooch ran over to him. She picked him up slowly and looked him over. He was cradling his arm in his hand. She gave it a light squeeze, causing Neville to wince in pain.

"I think it's broken." Madam Hooch said. She then turned towards the rest of the class. "I want you all to remain firmly planted on the ground. If I see any of you up in the air, you'll be expelled faster than you can say Quidditch. I'm going to take Mr. Longbottom to the Hospital Wing." She placed her hand on Neville's back and started to guide him to Madam Pomfrey's expert care.

Harry rounded on Draco, only to find him bent over picking something up. He saw a glint of sunlight bounce off the object in Draco's hand. Draco tossed it in the air a couple of times. Harry noticed it as Neville's remembrall.

"Maybe if that fat oaf had given this a squeeze, he would have remembered to lean his fat arse forward."

"Give it here Malfoy," Harry said as he walked over to Draco, holding out his free hand.

"I think not," Draco said as he stepped over onto his broom. He flew up a few feet and shouted, "I think I'll leave it up here for him to find, perhaps on the roof."

Harry mounted his broom as well only to be stopped by Hermione.

"Harry, don't," She pleaded. "You heard what Madam Hooch said."

Harry just gave her a knowing smile and flew up after Draco.

"Boys," Hermione muttered as she looked up to where Harry had stopped.

"Give it here Malfoy or you'll be the one to get knocked off a broom." Harry said.

Draco paled slightly, he hadn't expected Harry to break the rules and fly up after him. "What gives you the right to make me?"

"Not so powerful up here without Dumb and Dumber, eh?" Harry said.

Draco scoffed at Harry. He then gripped the remembrall tightly. "If you want it so badly," Draco threw the remembrall as hard as he could, "Go get it!"

Harry followed the ball like a hawk. He shot after it at a blazing speed. He poured a little bit of his magic into the broom to increase the acceleration and top speed of the broom. He started to get closer to the ball. The ball leveled for a second before starting its fall back to earth. Harry pushed harder towards the ball. He then saw the tower that he was nearing. He couldn't veer off course. Otherwise, he would lose the ball. He extended his hand and caught the ball. He then did a quick front flip and slammed his feet into the tower walls in order to stop himself. He had to spread his feet out slightly so as not to slam into the window on the tower.

Unbeknownst to Harry, that window belonged to the teacher's meeting room, which currently housed one teacher, Professor McGonagall. She looked on in shock as she saw Harry speeding towards the window. When he was a few feet away, she saw him catch something. Then, with skill she hadn't seen in quite some time, he front flipped into a stop using his feet as a brace. He even missed the window completely. She looked out the window and saw him descending down to the field below. The other students started to rush towards him. She gathered her things and made her way to the training field.

Harry held up the remembrall as he descended down to the field. The crowd of students cheered as they started to run towards him. Only four people stayed where they were. Ron stood, his broom abandoned, with his arms folded. Crabbe and Goyle stood to either side of Draco. Draco was seething with rage as he looked at Harry.

"What is his deal?" Ron asked out loud. "He always has to act like a goody two shoes. Hogging the spotlight, and pretending to be so great."

"Potter will rue the day that he messed with me." Draco said.

Both kids heard the other and looked towards each other. An unspoken alliance was made that day. Neither boy would like it, but they had a common enemy. That enemy was Harry Potter, Bloody-Boy-Who-Lived.

"Harry, that was extremely reckless." Hermione said as she hugged him. "What were you thinking?"

"I was thinking that I had to get Neville's remembrall back from Malfoy." Harry said as he returned the hug.

"Mr. Potter," said a voice from outside the crowd.

The cheering died instantly as the group parted. Professor McGonagall stepped up to both of the kids. They separated and looked rather sheepish.

"Professor, is there something I can help you with?" Harry asked, trying to sound innocent.

"Come with me," Professor McGonagall said as she turned to leave.

Harry looked sullen as he walked in step with Professor McGonagall. Hermione looked on, worry evident in her eyes. Harry gave a halfhearted smile back towards her, before he turned a corner. Harry knew he was in big trouble this time. He started to question his rebellious attitude. Maybe it wasn't as beneficial to try and do things his way. Maybe the right way was the correct way, although sometimes, the right thing to do may seem like the wrong thing at the time.

"Professor, am I in trouble?" Harry asked hesitantly.

"Never before had I seen such a stunt." Professor McGonagall said as she shook her head.

Harry lowered his head. He was about to apologize when Professor McGonagall suddenly stopped. Harry looked towards the door. This wasn't Professor McGonagall's office. It was the DADA classroom. She poked her head inside and asked Professor Quirrell if she could borrow wood for a moment.

Wood, could they really be into corporal punishment at this school? Well, at least it's only corporal punishment. At least he wouldn't be expelled. Although, he didn't fancy a beating either. He left that sort of life a long time ago. Maybe it would only be a slap on the hands, like in his other schools. He flexed his hands slightly in nervous anticipation of the oncoming pain. Suddenly a boy, probably in his fourth or fifth year, stepped out of the room.

"Can I help you with something professor?" the boy asked. Harry realized that wood wasn't referring to an object. It was a name, this boy's name.

"Wood, I think I've found you a new seeker." Professor McGonagall said with a smile.

"Really, are you serious?" Wood asked as excitement filled his eyes.

"He was remarkable. I saw him catch an object right out of the air, and only a few feet away from a tower wall."

"It was just a remembrall." Harry said quietly.

"Just a remembrall, those things are nigh invisible," Wood said happily, as he started to look Harry over. "Oh I like this one professor. He's very small, great for speed. He'll do excellently."

"I'll do excellently for what?" Harry asked. "Wait, seeker, do you mean for Quidditch?" Suddenly Harry was also excited. "You mean to say that I'll be able to play Quidditch?"

"If I train you right, you'll be our seeker." Wood said.

"Harry, this is Oliver Wood. He is the Gryffindor team's captain and keeper."

"Who are the beaters? Who are the chasers? Who are on the other teams?" Harry started firing off questions left and right. "Oh, I can't wait to tell my dad."

Oliver looked confused. "Dad, but I thought..."

"Long story," Harry held up a hand to dismiss the question.

Oliver looked at McGonagall. She nodded her head so he dismissed the question as well. "What about a broom? Surely, he hasn't got one. It'd have to be a Cleansweep Seven or a Nimbus Two Thousand. And you say he caught a remembrall in midair only a few feet from a tower?"

"He was speeding towards it, nearly going the full speed of our school brooms. I don't think Charlie Weasley could have pulled that one off." Professor McGonagall then turned to Harry. "I'll see about getting you a broom Harry."

"Thanks professor," Harry said as he embraced her in a hug.

"No thanks are necessary Mr. Potter. Just promise me you'll win us the Quidditch cup this year. We haven't won it in the past seven years."

"I'll do my best," Harry promised.

"I'll do mine as well," Wood said.

Some time later, Harry plopped down in a seat in between Hermione and Neville. He had on a goofy grin as he piled some chicken and potatoes onto his plate. Harry was about to dig in when he saw their expectant faces. His grin only grew as he returned to his food.

"Don't leave us in the dark Potter," Blaise said quickly.

"What happened?" Tracy asked.

"I'm the new Gryffindor seeker." Harry said after swallowing a bite of chicken. "Professor McGonagall wants to keep it a secret though, to surprise the other teams."

"Harry, some of us are in the houses of those other teams." Susan said. "Maybe you shouldn't have told us."

"I trust you guys." Harry said with a wave of his hand.

"Having your last meal before you're sent back home, eh Potter?" Draco said from behind Harry.

"Why am I not surprised?" Harry asked as he set his fork down. "And no, I'm not having my last meal." Harry turned in his seat to see a look of confusion on Draco's face. "Surprised? I would be too if my ploy didn't go according to plan either."

"What ploy?" Draco asked.

Harry shook his head, "Never mind, I'm not going to start an argument." Harry took a napkin and wiped his mouth with it. "I'm late for Charms class anyways." Harry then stood up and walked out of the Great Hall.

"The bell hasn't even rung yet Draco." Crabbe said.

"I know that!" Draco yelled as he stormed off to his table.

"Harry barely touched his food," Neville said as he looked towards Harry's plate.

"I'll go see if he's okay." Hermione said. She stood up and walked out of the Great Hall, hoping to find Harry.

Hermione thought she would find Harry standing outside the hall. She was wrong. She looked around but couldn't find him anywhere nearby. She decided to head over to the Charms classroom to see if he was there. Sure enough, Harry was sitting near the front of the class. He was quietly reading a small worn out book. Hermione silently walked up to Harry and peered over his shoulder.

"What are you reading?" Hermione asked.

"My mum's diary," Harry said. "I've read it a few times already."

"What is your mum like?" Hermione sat down next to Harry.

"She's smart, nice, and very pretty." Harry said with a smile. "She was great at Charms and Potions class."

"I can't wait to meet her." Hermione said.

"Oh you'd love her Hermione." Harry said as he placed the diary down. "She loves to learn as much as you do."

Harry smiled as he started to tell Hermione all about his parents, every thing from large details down to their smallest characteristics. Hermione listened to Harry without interruption. She was happy that he was happy. Lately Ron and Draco were making every day seem like a chore to him. Why wouldn't people just leave him alone to do what he wants?

"Still, I wish they were there when I was growing up." Harry said with a mock laugh. "It would have been so much better than..." Harry trailed off.

"Harry, you know I'm always here if you need to talk, right?" Hermione asked.

"Of course I do Hermione." Harry said. "It's just ... hard."

"I know," Hermione said as she placed her hand over Harry's hand. "I also know that it hurts more to keep things bottled up."

Harry flipped his hand over to hold Hermione's hand. "I'll tell you all about it tonight."

"Alright," Hermione said as she smiled at Harry.

"Well, usually my Ravenclaws are the first ones to class," Said a squeaky voice from the door to the class.

Harry and Hermione turned towards the door to see a short man walking into the room. "Sorry professor, I just didn't want to be in the Great Hall." Harry said.

"Oh," the short man started to walk towards the two of them, "And why might that be?"

"Ever since I've come here, I haven't had a peaceful lunch." Harry said. "Well, most of my meals deal with something happening."

"Have you talked to any of the other teachers about this?" said the tiny professor.

"Just you sir," Harry said.

Just then, Susan and Hannah entered the room with a couple of other Hufflepuffs. "Perhaps you should bring this to the attention of Professor McGonagall."

"I'll do that, thank you professor." Harry said.

Harry opened his mother's diary and continued to read it as the room filled up. He tilted the book slightly, allowing Hermione to read it along with him. She tried not to at first, to respect his mother's memory. However, when she caught sight of an easier way to cast certain spells, she was hooked. She would have snatched the book out of Harry's hand, had it not been for the pleasant interruption given by the professor.

"Good evening class, my name is Filius Flitwick." Professor Flitwick said.

By now, most of the first year students knew the second part to the teachers' usual introductions. So naturally they all chimed together, "Good evening Professor Flitwick."

"Yes, well, shall we proceed with today's lecture?" Professor Flitwick said, slightly taken aback by their intuition. Professor Flitwick had to stand on top of a pile of books in order to see over his podium. He unfurled a small parchment and proceeded to take attendance. He nearly fell off the pile of books when he came to Harry's name. He hadn't realized that the boy he had talked to was the famed Boy-Who-Lived. No matter, it just came as a surprise, no need to embarrass the boy with his fame.

"Today we will be learning a simple, yet effective, charm." Professor Flitwick said as he pulled out his wand. "The wand movement is simple, a half-elliptical swish to your left, and a slight flick towards the intended target." He watched as the students followed the wand movements. "This wand movement is used to cast a Repairing Charm. The incantation for this charm is, Reparo. The effects can be increased by using the Latin name for the object being repaired. In lieu of no Latin name, the spell can still be performed if you concentrate hard enough."

"This spell would have been really useful when growing up," Harry whispered. Hermione inclined her head slightly towards Harry,

indicating she was listening. "My glasses broke more times than I can count."

"I didn't know you wore glasses." Hermione whispered.

"Contacts," Harry pointed just under his eye.

"I will now be handing you each a small teacup. When you receive it, I want you to break it. Try not to hurt yourself in the process. Then I want you to cast the Reparo Charm on the cup to repair it." Professor Flitwick sent over a single teacup to each student. "Now, there is no Latin word for teacup. However, there is one for cup, Calix. If you find it difficult to mend the cup by just saying Reparo, you can use the incantation Calix Reparo, to increase the effectiveness of the spell."

Harry broke his teacup by hitting his desk with it. The cup broke into quite a few pieces. He looked over to see Hermione had somehow managed to break her cup into only three pieces. Harry steadied his wand, repeated the movements, and said the incantation. The pieces wiggled slightly then flew together into the previous condition of the cup. Harry turned to Hermione and smiled. He saw that Hermione had also accomplished the spell on her first try.

"I read up on this spell quite a few times while I was home," Hermione said. "I still wish I could have tested it out, but Professor McGonagall told me that I couldn't because I wasn't old enough."

"She was the one who introduced your family to magic?" Harry asked.

"Yes," Hermione said as she turned to Neville to see if he had succeeded. Neville's cup had come together, but it looked as if the pieces were put back together randomly. "Neville, you have to think about the original object, not just the spell."

"Oh yeah, I forgot." Neville said with a chuckle. He then recast the spell, causing the cup to reform to its original state. "Thanks Hermione."

"It was no trouble Neville." Hermione smiled at his thanks.

"Very well done you three," Professor Flitwick said as he hobbled over to them. "Five points to Gryffindor."

"Thank you professor," Hermione said.

Harry suddenly heard loud pop noise from across the room. He looked up just in time to see a teacup flying towards Hermione. He grabbed his Charms book and held it in front of her, causing the teacup to smash against the book.

"I'm so sorry, I didn't mean for that to happen," said Seamus Finnigan from across the room.

"Be careful with your spells lad. You want to cast a Reparo, not a Banishing Charm." Professor Flitwick said as he hobbled over to the young man.

"I'm sorry, I can't seem to get any spell right the first time around." Seamus said sheepishly.

"Miss Granger, are you alright?" Professor Flitwick asked.

"Yes I'm fine," Hermione said as she recovered from the near miss. "If it wasn't for Harry, I would be sporting a large bruise on my forehead right about now." She laughed a little bit. This allowed Professor Flitwick to relax slightly.

"Very well," Professor Flitwick said as he returned to his podium. "Everyone, return to practicing the charm."

Harry, Hermione, and Neville spent the rest of class breaking and repairing their teacups. At one point Susan and Hannah asked for help with the spell. Susan almost had it. However, Hannah had the same trouble Neville did. Harry and Hermione assisted them both with the spells. A few minutes later, they were all repairing their teacups just to pass the time. The simplicity of the spell allowed most of the students to learn it by the time class had let out.

"I'm not looking forward to the next class." Harry said as he packed his things away.

"You have Potions next right?" Susan asked.

"Yeah," Harry said dismally. "I don't think Snape likes me."

"What gave you that impression?" Hermione asked.

"Well the Legilimency attack for one," Harry said as he held up a finger. He then held up a second finger. "Secondly, he always seems to be angry when he looks at me."

"Maybe he's just constipated." Neville said. Neville blushed when everyone stared at him. "Did I say that out loud?" He received four nods in confirmation, "Oops."

"No worries Neville," Harry laughed. "At least I'm not too worried about Snape anymore."

"Harry, that's Professor Snape," Hermione corrected.

"Right, sorry Hermione," Harry said apologetically. "I'll just have to imagine Professor Snape being constipated."

"Right," Hermione said as she closed her eyes to try and rid herself of the mental image.

The group came to a junction in the halls and separated for their appropriate classes. A few sections down, they met up with Blaise, Daphne, and Tracy. Tracy was looking very nervous as they walked towards the dungeons. Harry noticed this and decided to pull them aside into an empty classroom.

"Okay Tracy, what's up? You look like a cat on hot bricks."

Tracy nervously shifted her stance. Daphne looked from Harry to Tracy.

"Tracy relax, he's not going to do anything weird about it. He isn't like that." Daphne said reassuringly.

Tracy looked up into Daphne's eyes with a worried expression. Daphne nodded and then gently shoved her towards Harry. Tracy blushed as she knelt down in front of Harry.

"Since you saved my life today, I am in your debt. I am yours to do with as you please." Tracy said.

"Why does everyone insist on kneeling before me?" Harry asked exasperated. Harry bent down and pulled Tracy up. "How about if you just be my friend, okay?"

"I'm already your friend." Tracy said cautiously.

"Great, then we're done here right?" Harry looked around at everyone else. Everyone slowly nodded his or her heads. "Excellent, on to Potions Class then, we have to deal with a constipated Professor Snape." Harry put emphasis on Snape's title as he looked towards Hermione.

When they exited the empty classroom, they all burst out laughing. It was only a few short minutes before they reached the dungeons and their intended destination. They were still quite teary eyed as they entered the room. They had laughed all the way to the dungeons. They took their seats near the front. Gryffindors unconsciously migrated to the right of the class, while the Slytherins migrated to the left. Harry and his group were forced to follow suit.

As soon as they all pulled out their wands, the door to the classroom burst open. Snape came striding into the room, cloak billowing behind him. Harry wondered how he did this with a clear absence of wind. Snape pulled his wand out. He used it to close the door, and pull the drapes over the windows. Even though they were in the dungeons of the castle, the area was built into the side of a cliff, so they had some windows. Snape then holstered his wand.

"Put your wands away." Snape commanded. "There will be no silly wand waving in my classroom." He then strode over to his desk and leaned back onto it. "I hope you all know who I am because I'm not going to go through the introductions. You will do as you are told or you will leave the room." Snape's gaze lingered on Harry for a fraction of a second before he turned away.

"Potions are an exact art," Snape said as he pulled his cloak around him ominously, "The gentle simmering cauldron, to the enchanting fumes, the slight curves of a potion's flask, to the mesmerizing array of power of liquids as they move through your veins. I can teach you how to ensnare the senses, bewitch the mind, brew glory, and even put a stopper in death." Snape's gaze found Harry once again, only this time Harry was writing on a piece of parchment. Snape looked

towards the parchment and saw his words written verbatim. "It seems only Mr. Potter here has realized the need for this to be written down."

Harry looked up suddenly at the mention of his name. "Did you call my name sir?" Harry asked.

"Perhaps it would be better for you to pay attention as you write down what I say." Snape said with a sneer. He then raised his eyebrows in realization. "Ah yes, Harry Potter, our new celebrity." Harry could almost feel Draco's sneering just out of eyesight.

"Sorry sir, but I don't hold myself in regards to something I don't remember doing." Harry said.

Snape's sneer turned to a look of contentment for a fraction of a second. "Tell me Mr. Potter, what you would get if you mixed powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood."

"I think it's the Draught of Living Death sir, a potent sleeping potion." Harry said, without breaking their staring contest.

"Very good," Snape said. "Now tell me, where you would find a bezoar?"

"It's most commonly found in a goat's stomach, though some other animals can produce them as well. It's known for curing most if not all poisons."

"What is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?"

"Nothing, they are synonymous with each other. Another word for them is aconite."

"It seems that your fame hasn't gone to your head." Snape said as gave an infinitesimal smirk. He then snapped to the rest of the class. "Well, why aren't you writing that all down." There was another flurry of scribbles as people wrote down the notes. "Today, you will be brewing a potion to cure boils." He thrust his wand at his blackboard. The instructions started to write themselves on the blackboard. "Follow these carefully. No more than two to a group." Snape said.

Harry and Hermione paired up while Neville was forced to pair up with Ron. Daphne and Tracy paired up together. Blaise was forced to pair up with Draco. Harry retrieved the ingredients, while Hermione prepared the cauldron. Hermione took charge of the potion while Harry followed. He was left to prepare the ingredients while Hermione watched over the concoction.

About halfway through the class Harry started to hear a sizzling noise coming from his left. He then heard something that sounded like a depth charge going off. He looked to his left to see Ron covered in his potion. Neville had barely managed to get out of the way. Angry boils started to erupt all over Ron.

"Foolish boy," Snape said as he strode over to him. "I told you to follow the directions carefully." Snape waved his wand causing their potion to vanish. "Longbottom, take Weasley to the hospital wing. Afterwards, I want you to report back here." Snape commanded.

Neville nodded his head and helped Ron out of the room. Harry watched Neville leave the classroom with his head held low. Harry turned to Hermione and raised his eyebrows in concern. Hermione returned the unasked question with a shrug. Harry would have to ask Neville about it at dinner that night.

The second half of class was boring and passed by rather quickly for Harry. About twenty minutes before class ended, Neville returned and sat down at his chair. He pulled out his textbook and started to read through it. Harry and Hermione finished their potion and handed it in to Professor Snape. When Harry sat the potion down on his desk, Snape stared at him for a few seconds, as if trying to decide whether to ask him a question or not.

"Did you want something from me professor?" Harry asked as he was starting to get curious.

"Stay a few minutes after class," Snape ordered.

Harry glared at Snape for a few seconds, wishing he new Legilimency so that he could tell what his professor was thinking. He then nodded curtly before returning to his cauldron to help Hermione clean up. It took a few minutes to clean up the remains of the potion they had made. He sighed when he remembered he skived off on

learning basic cleaning and tidiness charms while staying with the Deadmans.

"Hermione, Professor Snape wants to talk to me after class." Harry said. "Do you mind waiting for me?"

"Alright," Hermione said as she looked up from her satchel. "I'll see if the others want to wait as well."

Harry nodded as Hermione walked over to Blaise, Daphne, and Tracy. Harry noticed them look towards him for a second before turning back to Hermione and nodding. Harry gathered up his things and, along with Neville, walked up to Professor Snape's desk.

"You wanted to see us sir?" Harry asked as they approached him.

"I'll be with you in a minute Potter." Snape said tersely, before turning towards Neville. "Mr. Longbottom, you were partnered with the Weasley boy, correct?"

"Y-yes sir," Neville stuttered.

"Why is it that you were not covered in your potion when your cauldron exploded?" Snape asked.

"I didn't s-sabotage it, if that's what you're asking." Neville said as he looked away from Snape. "I saw Ron add the porcupine quills too early. It was too late to tell him to stop, so I just backed up before the worst happened."

"Very well, I shall overlook the mishap on your part." Snape said. Neville turned to go but Snape stopped him. "Partner up with someone other than the Weasley boy next time Mr. Longbottom. Use some of that intelligence that you nearly showed today."

"Th-thank you professor," Neville said as he bowed slightly and left.

When Neville exited the room, Harry blurted out. "What are you on about?"

"Caution Mr. Potter," Snape said as he held up a hand. "You do not wish to receive a detention this early in the year."

Harry opened his mouth to reply but thought better of it. Instead, he simply nodded.

"Now, as to the reason why I asked for you to stay after class," Snape said. He was silent for a few seconds before he sighed. "I've been hearing a rumor around the teacher's lounge."

Harry, curiosity piqued, muttered, "Oh, what rumor?"

"Are you truly able to speak to your parents Mr. Potter?" Snape asked.

Harry was quite taken aback. He expected hatred, or even annoyance from Snape. Instead, Snape looked somber, almost pleading. "Yes, that is true."

"Could you relay a message for me?" Snape asked before adding, "To your mother?"

Harry held up a hand. "Professor, I've been reading my mother's diary. I know what happened between the two of you." Snape bowed his head, expecting a no from Harry. "I think you should know that she had long since forgiven you for saying that word to her."

"She did?" Snape asked, hope evident in his eyes.

"Yes," Harry closed his eyes as he nodded his head. "Perhaps," Harry started before pausing. "Perhaps, you should join Professor McGonagall and me. We, along with my friends, are going to be meeting with them over the weekend."

"I do not know if I should," Professor Snape asked as he placed his head in his hands. "I've done so much to ostracize myself from a friendship with your mother."

Harry then placed his hand on Professor Snape's shoulder. "It's not too late to try and make amends." Harry said.

"I shall have to think about it ... Mr. Potter." Snape added the formality after a slight pause.

"The offer will always be there for you to take professor." Harry said before turning to leave. When he reached the door, he called back

over his shoulder, "Sorry about the Snivellus remark in the Great Hall the other day." Harry saw Snape nod. He took that as his cue to leave. He opened the door to find himself in a verbal battle.

"Why won't you take me up on my offer?" Draco yelled to Daphne.

"Because I don't have to, so I won't!" Daphne yelled back.

"What seems to be the problem here?" Harry asked after getting everyone's attention.

"None of your business Potter." Draco sneered. "This is between me and Greengrass."

"Baron Malfoy," Harry said in an important sounding tone. He learned about noble titles from Godric on his second day at Hogwarts. "What business do you have with a protectorate of House Potter?"

Draco spun around towards Harry, "What did you say?"

"House Greengrass is currently under the protection of House Potter. If you wish to dispute this accord, you can do so through the necessary legal branches. If you do not wish to do so," Harry abandoned his tone for a more sinister one. "Then you can piss off before I send a letter to the current lord of House Malfoy." Harry then adopted a curious pose. "I wonder what I should write." Harry turned towards Draco. "Is Malfoy spelled with two L's or one?"

Draco stared at Harry, dumbfounded. He then turned away from the group and walked out of the dungeons. The group stared back at Draco as he left. They were silent for all of two seconds when he turned the corner before bursting out laughing.

"Oh, that was too rich." Tracy said.

"The look on his face was priceless." Daphne agreed.

"I thought he was going to wet himself." Neville offered.

Harry nodded in agreement with everyone before wiping away a single tear from his eye. "Oh, I think I'm going to like it here."

(A/N) Aww, Fawkes is so sad, it breaks my heart. A certain white phoenix is going to need to cheer him up. McGonagall isn't taking crap from no one when they talk about Harry's parents. Harry displays his usual seeker prowess. Also, he knows about Quidditch guys and gals. Tom taught him the sport as well as the owner of Quality Quidditch Supplies. This is why he's so excited. He also talked to his dad about it. Mealtimes are so much fun for Harry right? Sarcasm overload detected. A little foreshadowing done in Charms class. Now as for Potions class and Snape. I know I said I was going to do something that I didn't think had been done yet. That is still to come. Maybe next chapter, maybe not. I do not know for sure how the story line will play out. I hope I'm starting to get better at explaining random knowledge or actions that Harry does. If not, point them out to me and I will either fix it or explain it in the next chapter. Anyways. This is Kunaiswarm signing off. Ciao.

(A/N): Okay, first off please read this note, it is kind of important, maybe. This chapter is a little shorter than all of the others, sorry about that. But on a positive side, my story is now 100k+ words long, yay. Now for the semi-important things. This story is entirely history. It explains why a lot of things are the way that they are. It also serves as a platform for an extreme amount of foreshadowing. A lot of the things explained in this chapter will be touched upon every year of this series. Some of you may not like history though. You can skip this chapter if you want, but I don't recommend it. Anyways. There are some things in here that I want to get off my chest. There is a mention of torture in this chapter. I will not ever, EVER, explain further into what goes on during the torture. There is a certain four letter word that begins with 'R' that I absolutely abhor. I will not ever mention that word in any of my chapters or any of my stories. If you want to infer that's what happens during torture, be my guest. I won't stop you but I won't agree with you either. It is an evil act that does not deserve to have ever been thought of. Ranting aside, let me get to the reviews.

ROBERT-19588, those are excellent comments and questions. Yes the story is called Heir of Sword and Staff, for two reasons. One, that was the original title used by Leonineus, I didn't want to change it. Two, he does in fact use his sword and staff. He doesn't use his sword that much because he isn't trained in swordplay. He, in fact, does use his staff. He uses it all the time he uses magic. He shrunk his staff down to the size of a wand. Now I will say that it is much stronger in it's staff form, but it is also more cumbersome. Even though Harry owns Hogwarts, he has yet to find out about something that is revealed in this chapter. While magicals can offer up their magic to prove a point when asked a question or when talking about something important, it isn't necessary. I've read so many stories where people throw that around all willy nilly. I probably will use it for more drastic scenarios. Other than that, I might not mention unbreakable vows too much. As for another of your questions, Harry doesn't fire Dumbledore because he can't. That is up to the Board of Governors and the Wisengamot. As for the harm thing, again I point out that he does not know how to do that. Life debts are not used in the Harry Potter stories because of all the people that Harry Potter saved. If a life debt works the way I think it does, that means that every single magical in Britain, save Death Eaters, would owe Harry a life debt. That's my opinion though. Yes Harry has Excalibur, no that does not make him a king. Only the

amount of power he has and land he owns makes him a lord. And I have a plan for Fawkes, Dobby, and Sirius don't you worry.

As a recap, no Harry isn't super powerful superman, he is only as strong as his schooling and training take him. I hope that answers a lot of peoples questions. So far, only Harry and Hermione are starting to form a pairing. Others will be developed throughout the years, but I will focus more on Harry/Hermione. Old-crow asks why Dumbledore seems to have been dark/grey for some time. That's simple, read this chapter and most, if not all, will be explained. Aleazanna, thanks for the review. I didn't notice that contradiction in those two chapters. I suppose I wanted to have it interpreted as the owners wanting Harry to learn to buy things because they won't always be there. Harry just assumed incorrectly. Also, with the issue in chapter 9 and Neville's choice of words, I suppose that could be considered having Harry catch Neville using the wrong word.

Okay, sorry for this long author's note, but there were a lot of questions that I wanted to answer. I don't like answering in replies because not everyone learns the answer. Anyways, read and review, thanks.

Dinner in the Great Hall is usually fraught with discussions of between friends on how their days were. Many of them compare classes, some compare lessons. Others compare other people. Do you think he or she would be a good friend? Do you think such and such likes me? What is usually a place of learning is now a social gathering where learning is placed aside.

One would rather live their lives, wouldn't you think? You don't ever want to be forced to do anything via a set of rules that you never agreed upon following. How does one go about living their lives within a set of binding rules that hold you back? That's an easy one. You change the rules. How do you change the rules you ask? That's also an easy one, baby steps.

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry was built by four people. They are Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff, Rowena Ravenclaw, and Salazar Slytherin. These four souls gathered to establish a place of learning for young witches and wizards. Their hope was to create a place where knowledge could flourish. Godric Gryffindor favored the bold and courageous. Helga Hufflepuff, the just and

loyal. Rowena Ravenclaw, the gifted and bright. Salazar Slytherin, the cunning and ambitious.

During their time building these sacred halls, the four founders became rather close with each other. They formed a bond of friendship through hard work and strife. They fought to conceal their school from the prying eyes of the mundane society. These mundane people would later be called muggles. Wards, enchantments, runes, all these and more went into the creation of the school.

Hogwarts was built between a lake and a crescent moon shaped forest. The lake was filled with all sorts of magical creatures, as was the forest. Hogwarts became a safe haven for various creatures, whether they are creatures of light or dark. Muggles feared all that they did not know. Magic was widely unknown to muggles. They learned quickly how to kill all sorts of magical creatures. The four founders created Hogwarts as a sanctuary for magical people and creatures alike.

Animals distinctively separate based on survival of the fittest or their food chains. Herbivores would hide in secluded areas, far away from carnivores. The more intelligent magical creatures were involuntarily placed as their magical guardians. Although unintentional, the intelligent creatures took their roles seriously. They defended the helpless, often through peaceful solutions. However, the darkness has a hard time understanding reason.

At one point, the darkness threatened to overcome the forest and the lake. The four founders gave the more intelligent creatures the means to defend the weak. Godric Gryffindor gave the mightiest creature a sword that was dwarfed only by his own. Helga Hufflepuff gave the most just a way to heal even the greatest wounds. Rowena Ravenclaw gave the wisest a way to increase their mental capacity greatly. Salazar Slytherin gave the most cunning a way to see the best way past any hardship.

Armed with these four weapons, the magical creatures' champions fought to gain a balance over the forest and lake. It took many years for the conflict to subside. In the end, the creatures learned to stay within their set boundaries. The light creatures were saved from the dark, while the dark creatures were cowed into smaller pastures.

This peace and serenity would last for as long as it was not disturbed.

The four champions accomplished their tasks. They migrated to their respective domains. They would be known for all eternity in their respective clans. A mighty goblin left to craft a vast city of gold. The noble phoenix left to his fiery perch, to await its companion in life. The wise centaur created a village within the boundaries of the forest, helping his clan thrive. The cunning basilisk delved deep within the catacombs of Hogwarts, to await its summons from one of Slytherin's true heirs. The champions lived out their lives in solitude or their families embrace. Solitude grants patience, whereas family grants happiness. Only two of the four creatures remain alive today.

The four founders, satisfied with the peace of their surroundings, returned to the construction of the school. Each founder left a small portion of themselves in the school. They siphoned their magical cores into the school. They gave the school life, a way to protect itself, and a heart to make the decisions in the absence of a guide. Any true heir of any of the founders would be able to communicate with the school. In doing so, they would be able to guide her in defending the school. The school would wait patiently until that day would be needed.

The four founders, once finished, gathered a mass of people to their halls. Within these sacred walls of Hogwarts, the four founders taught the students within all the ways of magic that they knew. Word spread quickly of Hogwarts and its surroundings. Creatures and people were drawn to the school like moths to a flame. Some of the people were masters of fields that the four founders were not so adept at teaching. Thus, the school grew into a prosperous place. The walls of Hogwarts would stand tall as long as those who wished to learn would stand within.

Over the years, the founders grew closer to each other as any family would. Special bonds were formed between two pairs of the founders. Godric Gryffindor found solace and comfort in Rowena Ravenclaw's embrace. In turn, she found love and devotion from him. Helga Hufflepuff found her own form of devotion from Salazar Slytherin. Their respective fields of knowledge led the two to grow rather fond of each other. They often found themselves alone in a lab, conversing rather than working.

The founders later married and lived happy lives. They would eventually create their own extended families. The families of all of the staff and students led to the creation of a nearby town known as Hogsmeade. The village was the first and only purely magical village in all of Britain. The housing was built near a wide-open area just outside of the Hogwarts grounds. Shops and other places of business sprung up overnight. These were built closer to the gates so the students could shop there on their weekends. A train station was built in the village to allow quicker and safer passage for magicals into Hogwarts. The train station was introduced after a muggle born student made a comment about a coal train that was used to transport goods.

The founders grew older as the years passed them by. Magical people live as long as their cores can permit them to live. Lesser witches and wizards live nearly twice as long as muggles. Those with powerful cores, like the founders, can live for centuries before they expire. Though the founders had lived for nearly three hundred years, they left Hogwarts in the capable hands of those much younger than they were. They allowed those who weren't their heirs to have some control over the school. It wasn't as much as they left for their heirs, but it was enough.

The founders were fond of their work. They were happy with what they had done for the magical community. They inspired unity despite a person's background. They inspired growth despite a person's faults. Whether you were magical, or a squib, you had a place in Hogwarts or Hogsmeade. Even if you were born without the magic of your parents, no one treated you any differently. These differences allowed people to learn to be dependent on others just as much as you should be dependent on yourself.

All things must eventually end. Eventually the founders passed on into the next great adventure. Behind them, they left a legacy that would be told for countless ages to come. Their heirs were proud of who their ancestors were. They filled their roles very well in aiding the future generations.

As life must end, so too must ideals. When the goblin apprentice of Godric Gryffindor created his fabled golden city in the depths of a mountain, he began to share his wealth with his clan. The magical people of the world asked for goblin assistance in creating a stable economy for them to grow on. The goblins accepted this request

without a second thought. The goblins gave the magical world a system using gold, silver, and bronze coins as the basis of their economy. The wizards were very grateful to the goblin nation. However, some wizards were not so grateful.

A small group of witches and wizards formed with the ideal of a supremacy over other races. These people thought that they were better than all other races. They immediately began to create a set of rules and guidelines to establish the hierarchy of magical creatures, with humans at the top.

One individual, Sir William Malfoy, gave the idea that this shouldn't just be limited to creatures, but humans as well. Those with pure blood in their veins, not tainted with muggle blood, should have the most power. Those with one pureblood parent were also given some power. They were pitied upon because of their unfortunate accident of having a muggle parent. Those with no pureblood parents would receive little rights, only because they were still better than a magical creature of course. Muggles with no magical power whatsoever were put below magical creatures. Eventually, halfbloods were considered scum as well. No longer were they considered accidents. However, they still held some power over the muggle born magicals.

This unfortunate turn of events led to the creation of the pureblood regime. The magical world of Britain quickly took a turn for the worst. The purebloods demanded more gold from the goblins, even resorting to thievery on some occasions. This act sparked the first war between goblins and humans. The war was very bloody for both sides. During the course of the war, the fabled goblin sword given by Godric Gryffindor was lost. Never to be found again.

The centaurs, fearing similar altercations, fled deeper into the forest surrounding Hogwarts. Constantly on the move, the Centaur clans were never truly found by humans. The phoenix refused to go near a human until he felt the presence or call of his companion. He moved from volcano to volcano, never staying in the same place for longer than a month. The basilisk refused to venture to the surface from her dungeons. She traveled through the undergrounds catacombs to various untouched lands to hunt for food.

This act of cruelty upon the magical species of Earth marked the dawning of an era of strife for the magical populace of Britain and the surrounding areas. Germany followed closely after Britain in their laws. Many African and Asian magical communities also followed, but to a lesser extent. They revered the magical creatures in their lands, but they separated their human populace based on pureblood beliefs. America followed suit for a while until it had a massive civil war. Their muggles fought a war, while the magical community secretly fought their war. Afterwards, the pureblood supremacy died out almost instantly.

Countless generations of magical creatures were hunted for their ingredients in potions and enchantments. The once proud dragon race was reduced to mindless beasts through inbreeding and potions. Some species were able to escape the brunt of the onslaught, unicorns proved to fast for most to catch. However, the fastest unicorn can be caught with a well-placed trap.

Through forced inbreeding, the proud races of elves in Britain succumbed to deformities. These deformities, coupled with their terrible abuse, forced their species into obedience. They served the same humans that they used to call their allies. Their elegant features and fair skin were traded for a hunched body with skin like old leather. They traded their elfish name for the name given by the humans, House Elf.

Human magicals have been forcing the magical creatures of Britain into more and more obedient roles just to suit their needs. Those who escape, what the magicals eventually started to call culling, were branded dangerous creatures. Kill on sight orders were giving to all those with a wand. Any creature that was forced into subservient roles was prohibited from ever obtaining a wand. Most, if not all, of the human race was extremely naïve in their opinions of their power. They did not know that many magical creatures did not need a wand to perform magic.

Groups of people were formed in order to maintain the magical community's laws surrounding nonhumans. They were specially trained in the regulation and control of nonhuman species of magicals. Cull became a vile word amongst the nonhuman races of Britain. Proud races would stand up for themselves only to be cast aside into a recently dug ditch. Other races bowed before the possible slaughter of their people. This time was known to magical

and mundane alike as The Black Plague. It was named after the founder of the groups, Sir Frederick Black.

All species of Britain were devastated by the plague that nearly destroyed the country of Britain. Tenuous treaties were signed in the hopes of ending all the unnecessary bloodshed. The humans were killed to nearly one tenth of their original population. Sir William Malfoy and Sir Frederick Black were both cast out of the magical society for the near destruction of humanity in Britain. At least for a few years, they bought their way back into their lives with blood money.

With the treaties enacted, many hidden magical nonhumans began to show themselves once more. However, the more intelligent species fled Britain never to return. They left behind a single family of their species to send word if Britain would ever become a suitable place to live once more.

With the disappearance of a few entire species, the magical world began to lose their knowledge of certain species. Word of mouth could be a suitable form of knowledge, for a time. Those with conflicting words would destroy the remaining wisdom of magical creatures. Soon, most magicals forgot about entire species of magical creatures. The loss of this knowledge let the magical world experience their form of The Dark Ages.

Sickened with the way society had become, the heirs of the founders severed their ties with Britain's magical society. The heirs of Ravenclaw and Gryffindor went with the last few remaining intelligent dragons. With their combined knowledge, they were able to escape Britain and create a suitable home in France. The heirs of Hufflepuff and Slytherin went with the last remaining merfolk. These merfolk were the last of their kind that were still the embodiment of mundane tales. They were beautiful creatures that were half human half fish. The ones left in the Black Lake were a travesty to their species. It would be six hundred years before any of their heirs returned.

The treaties with the nonhumans allowed for a few centuries of peace. Those creatures that were ruled by the humans soon forgot about times of their freedom. The house elves in particular were the worst of this case. They soon began to adore their work for their masters. At some point, wizards formed a magical document that

restricted their magic as well as their will. Their population was dwindled down to reasonable numbers based on limits for propagation. Their race was nearing extinction.

Those who remembered their freedoms fought tooth and nail to try and return to that state. Goblins would incite a war at the drop of a hat. They would come up with any reason to try and reclaim their freedom. Wars were started every few years with the humans just to remind them they were still a people to be reckoned with. They were eventually successful in creating their own form of government that was separate from that of the humans. The goblins buried themselves deep within the mountain known today as Snowdon.

Humans were never the smartest race to grace the Earth's surface. They constantly ostracized themselves from the same species that they depended on for their daily lives. The house elves maintained their homes and the lifestyles of magical humans. The goblins maintained their wealth and their economy. Countless other creatures maintained their livelihoods. With each generation, the pureblood race of magicals grew dimmer and dimmer. It was up to the halfbloods and the first generations to keep up the magical community.

Halfbloods, those born with only one pureblood or magical parent, kept the government running. First generations, those who had no magical parent but were magical themselves, kept the businesses and lesser governmental positions running. Only the purebloods were in charge though. Only a pureblood could obtain any high form of work. Others were forced with the dull and unworthy jobs that a pureblood wouldn't be caught dead doing.

Purebloods were always contradicting what their own rules said. If the world started out with only pureblood witches and wizards, how did the creation of halfbloods come to be? True, the rules stating otherwise were only a recent occurrence. However, the creation of new halfbloods was on the rise. A first generation's child was not considered a halfblood if the parent married a pureblood. It was called a second generation witch or wizard.

The pureblood populace of Britain would have died out within the first two generations if they clung to their rules. They couldn't bear the fact of admitting their own faults in their rules. Instead, they resorted to their methods of controlling magical creatures to extend

their lines, namely inbreeding. Distant cousins were forced to marry to carry on either of their lines. Distant cousins turned into, "Fifth cousin twice removed." Then it gave way to, "Third cousin that we don't see very often."

It became common practice to set their sons and daughters up in arranged marriages. They did this to save the pureblood race from extinction. Many of the children that were pulled into this plan were outraged with their parents. Shortly after this, the spell for the unbreakable vow was created. Parents forced their children into these vows to preserve their family names. This was the second worst mistake that purebloods ever made. The male children were conditioned to go along with this since birth, they were all for it. The female children were more resilient to the conditioning from their parents. Within a year, all of the female pureblood children, with contracts, died due to breaking their vows.

The entire magical populace was outraged by this turn of events. They demanded that the magic behind the unbreakable vows be reduced. Thus, the unbreakable vows were changed. Now they merely turned the person who broke the vow into a squib, those with magical parents but no magical ability. The wordings of these unbreakable vows were also carefully monitored. Previously, the wording was simple, "I will marry him/her." If the child refused, even in casual conversation with other children, that child immediately died because of their own magic.

In the beginning of magic in Britain, the biggest killer was the unknown. What does this spell do? I wonder what would happen if I said it this way? Why do we wave these sticks around? Incompetence was a major factor in magical death. Eventually, common sense prevailed. However, that did not prevent others from accidentally killing others. Magicals were the largest source of their own deaths in the beginning.

When the mundane populace of Britain learned of magic, they cried heresy. Magic went against all known forms of religion. They imprisoned or killed all magicals they could find. Witchcraft and wizardry was soon punishable by death in medieval Britain. At first, the magicals toyed around with the idea that the mundane could kill them. They smiled as they were tied to stakes and set ablaze. Flame freezing charms were taught to children as soon as they could pick up a wand. At first, the mundane were confused. They

couldn't understand why fire didn't kill them. No matter, beheading seemed to work just fine.

Animosity between the magical race and the mundane race only grew over the years. Magicals grew more careful of their actions. They were more secretive of what they knew and where they lived. The statute of secrecy was created in the early fourteenth century. Those few magicals that did break the law were punished by the immediate removal of their magic. Rules began to govern the magical society for nearly everything they did. Where they could go, where they could live, all of it was controlled.

The one thing that both sides of the coin had in common was that strife breeds prosperity. Because of the daunting pressure of the mundane society on the magical society, many breakthroughs were made in spells. Wards were created left and right to keep the mundane society away from the magical areas of Britain. Spells were created to control a person or divert a person from what they were doing. Some of these spells were quickly placed as taboo because of their ability to be used on other magicals.

With great power comes great responsibility. That simple moral was tossed out the window long ago. Those with great power sought more power. Dark Lords and Dark Ladies were springing up left and right. An era of strife returned to Britain. Those opposed to the dark were dealt with. They were either killed outright, or tortured. Those who were killed outright got off easy. The systematic torture of entire families could last days, weeks, or even months.

Only when things appear to be at its darkest moment will you be able to see the light. A small band of warriors fought against the darkness. They were made up of pureblood, halfblood, and first generation families. These people fought with all they had against the darkness and cast it out of Britain with a ferocity that was thought lost by most magicals. These people created a magical bond with each other during this time of strife. This bond increased their power dramatically. With this power, the darkness was defeated by the light.

Peace reigned once more in Britain. This peace lasted long enough for the goblins to declare a few more wars. It lasted long enough for the purebloods to extend their control further. It lasted long enough for those to forget what the first true peace was like. Never again

had a magical person experienced true peace and prosperity. Only those with an already established wealth or power could feel a glimmer of peace.

People's lives were torn asunder. You no longer went to social functions as a way to kill time. You went there to exert your power further amongst others. No longer did you purchase your house because you needed a place to live. You purchased a manor to show others how rich you were. No longer did you become someone's friend or spouse because you liked them. You only did so because it was a significant power play. The world of magic delved into the shadier sides of politics. The world was choking on its own arrogance.

Those who knew about the way their lives were going did nothing to stop it. Those who didn't know about this were, well, ignorance is bliss. Lives became monotonous and many were unaware of the steady decline in the wizarding populace. There was one magical for every ten mundane people. Magic was steadily dying but no one was doing anything constructive about it.

Many purebloods eventually opted to rid themselves of their foolish thought of pureblood supremacy. They courted people from the mundane part of society to keep magic alive in Britain. Others kept to their pureblood lines. However, they no longer thought that they were superior to others. Only ten percent of the pureblood population in Britain continued to think that they were the dominant species. They just could not understand that other people or species could have a better way of thinking than they did.

Many magical creatures in Britain could have saved the magical populace. If the magical populace had adopted the fundamental aspects of magical creatures, they would have thrived instead of declined. Simple changes in life were not hard to accept for most people in the world. Purebloods, however, were so ingrained into their rituals and lifestyle that they couldn't change even if they wanted to. Animals were the pinnacle of adaptation.

Dragons learned at a very young age that family was important. They learned that sharp things were dangerous and that hot things were good. Humans were evil creatures that poked them with their sharp things until the dragon would die. They would then harvest the creature for useful parts and leaving the rest to rot. They did not say

a prayer of thanks or bury the remains. Dragons were nearly hunted until extinction.

It wasn't until one man stood in front of a cowering dragon, that any thought was given towards the scaled wonders. The man, Sir Leon Lovegood, warned the people of the impending extinction of those wondrous dragons. Dragons were much more useful alive, rather than dead and harvested for their parts. Dragons were one of the only creatures that could keep a lethifold at bay or perhaps kill them. Britain's climate was a tad iffy for lethifolds. That did not mean that there were no lethifolds in Britain.

Lethifolds are darkness incarnate. They are similar only to dementors. They resemble an oil slick or a black mass on the ground if they do not move. Once they enter the hunt for prey, they are nearly unstoppable. They can devour a human whole and leave no trace of their attack. The only known way to stop a lethifold is with a Patronus Charm. The other way to stop a lethifold is with dragon fire. Dragon fire is the only substance that was hot enough to burn or kill a lethifold.

Dragons were some of the wisest creatures in creation. They were once capable of human speech. They had their own language of course, Draconic. This language of clicks and forms of guttural growls were too hard for humans to mimic, let alone learn. Humans feared that the dragons would either destroy or enslave the human race. They created potions and spells that would dumb the dragon race down to manageable levels. This, in turn, increased the amount of lethifold related deaths in Britain.

The few remaining sentient dragons fled from Britain. Their magic and knowledge went with them. A dragon's magic was nearly on par with that of an elf or a goblin. Most of their magic was used to increase their durability or the heat of their flames. Their knowledge, on the other hand, was ahead of their time. They knew how to create new magic better than anyone did. Their written language was far more powerful in runic design than Norse would ever be. Yet sadly, the Dragon races of the world fled to hidden alcoves. They refused to deal with humans until they were sure they would not be harmed.

The proud and strong goblins would have nothing to do with humans. They despised the walking roasts. Human meat was terrible. It was

too stringy and no amount of seasoning could make it tasteful. In the eyes of a goblin, if you weren't good enough to eat, you weren't good enough to meet. Goblins were master crafters. They built their homes right in the heart of mountains. They escaped the bigotry and animosity of humans by dwelling hundreds of feet below mountains.

The mountains provided an excellent first line of defense for the goblins. They were never attacked within their territory. They always took their battles to the lands above the earth. The surface dwelling goblins were there only as scouts for the armies that trained below. If any camp of goblin was found by humans, they immediately moved their camp to a new location. Goblins distrusted humans about as easily as they could chop their heads off with their weaponry.

The first treaties between goblins and humans were tentative. Neither side was too happy with stipulates made between the races. The humans had to allow the goblins to live freely within their domain under the mountains. They could not control any form of their government. In return, the goblins had to create and hold up an economy for the humans. They could not expand past the mountains that they were given. The lines of trust between the two races were stretched thin. A few goblins accepted their fate. They became complacent, never wanted any trouble. These goblins were looked down upon by other goblins. They called the nicer goblins spineless cowards.

Elves were almost the complete opposite of goblins. They lived in forests and high up in the trees. Their villages were beautifully designed out of wood and plants. Their magic was known far and wide, as a strong nature based magic. They were excellent potioners and excelled in the healing and restorative parts of magic. They were a kind and peaceful race. When they first met humans, they greeted them with open arms. Elves knew very little of Human betrayal. It was not a word commonly used in their society. A human could shake your hand with their left hand and stab you in the back with their right hand.

Over the years of their friendship, humans learned as much about elves as they could. They learned about their potion making abilities, about their magic, about their lives. Humans developed a way to bind an elf to their service. They accomplished this by invoking an ancient magic on the elves. This magic altered elfish magic to a

human's liking. The altered magic also deformed the elf's body. They were no longer the tall, elegant, beautiful creatures that their lore described them as being. They were now ugly, short, wrinkly creatures. Their forced inbreeding also didn't help their appearance. They were made to serve their master. The only way they could use their magic was if their master commanded them to do so.

Humans tried to control everything around them. If they couldn't control it, they just destroyed it. Entire races of creatures, both magical and mundane, were nearly brought to extinction this way. Those that escaped control took their magic and left Britain. The hardest thing for a human to control is magic. They tried to harness it with wands. Previously, wandless magic was the only way they knew how to cast magic. It quickly died out when the first wand was made. Why would you want to get tired after an hour of casting a simple spell? With a wand, you could cast that simple spell all day before you got tired.

Wands were the first crutch that wizards leaned upon in their thirst for power. They did everything and anything they could in order to make their lives easier. The lazy grew lazier while the strong grew stronger. Those with power developed a following. Those who followed one with power were desperate for power themselves. This is how dark witches and wizards are born. Many spells were invented to cause as much harm to a human as possible after this. Burning, bruising, breaking, melting, dissolving, destroying, maiming, ripping, tearing, anything they could use to inflict harm, the worst spells of all, control, pain, and death.

The Imperius Curse was first created to control dangerous creatures. It was used to make a dangerous creature leave you alone. Then they started to use it to rid people of their natural fears. Those who were afraid of heights, flying, spiders, jesters, horses, anything really, were eventually cured using this curse. At first, the spell was classified as a charm. It only took the first murder using the charm to change the title to curse.

Pain is truly a universal language to all. If you don't agree on something, inflict pain. If you dislike someone, inflict pain. Like the Imperius Curse, the Cruciatus curse was created to inflict pain on a person. It was originally used as a mild shock to resuscitate those whose hearts just stopped beating. It allowed just enough shock to jolt the heart back into regular cardiac rhythm. It was first created as

a healing spell. When it was first used as a torture device, it received the title of curse.

Many people will argue to the grave that the death curse was never used for anything beneficial. The Avada Kedavra spell was first created by a hunter. The woman was tired of bludgeoning hexes and cutting curses ruining the pelt or materials of her kill. She studied on a viable process to stop the heart of the animal and saving the materials. She based her research off of the Cruciatus charm. A powerful enough jolt directed towards the person would immediately stop the heart. She succeeded and was widely renowned as a genius. When the spell was first used to kill a human, it was changed to a curse. Oddly enough, the hunter who created the spell was the first victim.

One man, that's all it takes to change something in its entirety. One man can use a hammer as a weapon instead of a tool. Suddenly everyone now knows that a hammer can be used to kill. It took one man to change these three spells from beneficial to malignant spells. Those who seek absolute power are corrupted absolutely. All it takes is one man to ruin the world. In the history of Britain, two notable men nearly achieved this feat. One man, Gellert Grindelwald, nearly destroyed all of Europe. Another, Tom Riddle, nearly destroyed all of Britain.

Grindelwald was a man of stealth and subtlety. He preferred to hide in the shadows while he killed you. He was instrumental in the rise and fall of the Nazi regime. Many people thought that Adolf Hitler was the leader of the Nazi party. He was merely a pawn in Gellert's plan to rule all of Europe. He started out by influencing Hitler into creating the Nazis. Once this was finished, he merely needed to tell Hitler which person needed to die.

With the aid of Grindelwald, Hitler was able to establish power in Germany. With Hitler ruling Germany, the country entered into an age of prosperity. Their economy was back on track, and many people were able to find work. Hitler never knew he was influenced by his right hand man. He believed that he was the one coming up with all these grandiose ideas. Gellert was a genius in his fields of magic. He rarely had to use any magic at all to compel Hitler to do as he wished. A nudge here and a whisper there can easily sway a man's mind.

Once Hitler was firmly established in Germany, Gellert asked him if he was content with only Germany. Hitler reveled at the idea of controlling more. Gellert quietly collected Nazi soldiers to form his secret army. He told the army that they reported directly to Hitler unless he said otherwise. Dissent was almost immediate. Gellert fed them a hearty diet of Compulsion Charms and Imperius Curses until they followed him whole-heartedly.

This secret army, that Hitler thought he commanded, was used to begin collecting undesirables from Germany. At first, they only collected known first generation families. Then they started to collect other possible first generation families. Hitler began to issue his own orders alongside Grindelwald. Hitler began to see a pattern with all those being captured. They were of the same religious faith, Judaism.

Gellert saw Hitler's mistaken inference, but did nothing about it. He whispered new orders into Hitler's ear. Capture those who peddle their goods out of their houses. These people are an affliction. They will destroy your nation if left unchecked. Gypsies were the second group of people to be led away by Hitler's SS. The list steadily grew to include other groups of people. Members of the mundane society only saw this as removing waste from the streets. Members of the magical community saw this as a culling of their people. They started to flee to other parts of the continent. Some even fled across the Atlantic, to escape the oppression.

Soon after their culling projects started, Hitler began to stretch his influence. He began to send his army into neighboring countries. The attack on Poland instigated the start of the World War. Once Poland was attacked, France and Britain initiated a war on Germany. Poland quickly fell, along with France. Britain held its own against the continuous aerial assault on its soil. Gellert started to grow impatient with Hitler's tactics and, along with a small task force, decided to sneak into the United Kingdom.

Gellert found that the morale of Britain was surprisingly high. Their forces held off Germany at nearly every turn. Damage was severe of course, but that was to be expected. He began to lay down plans with his senior officers of possible places to attack in order to weaken Britain's defenses. It took months of careful planning to find out the weakest British air bases to attack. He was on his way back to the English Channel in order to radio Hitler when he was stopped

by a single man. This single man dispatched Gellert's men with a single wave of an oddly shaped stick.

Gellert was surprised that it took this long for another magical to find out about him. Normally magicals would keep out of mundane affairs. This Wizard seemed different from others though. He killed Gellert's fellow soldiers but spared him. Instead, he laid down his wand and asked to have a little chat with Gellert. Gellert was surprised, to say the least, at the scene that had unfolded in front of him. He agreed to go with the man after a few seconds of deliberation. Those few seconds were the most famous yet most unknown seconds in the history of Europe.

Gellert sat down in an empty house with this unknown man. Once settled down, the man introduced himself. He seemed to carry on an air of superiority that Gellert could identify with quite easily. He somehow knew that he was dealing with a man of equal power to his own. He wondered what a British wizard could have to say to him. He was there to find out a way to destroy the country, yet the man was sitting down with him as if it were teatime. Gellert would forever remember the name of the man sitting across from him, Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore.

Albus Dumbledore was an inherently manipulative man. He always achieved his goals, no matter the cost. He was able to sway others to his thinking by a mere utterance. All who saw him, saw a white knight clad in cloth. They saw a beacon of light against the encroaching darkness. Albus was widely known as the man who would end the war between the mundanes. Magicals did not normally get involved with mundane politics, but this threatened their lives as well.

Albus was a Paragon in the eyes of all those around him. He was a renegade in the eyes of a mirror. Many of the battles won in the skies over Britain were thanks to Albus. He cast reflective charms over some of the aircraft used by the Royal Air Force. A few bludgeoning hexes on passing Luftwaffe went unnoticed by mundanes. Though he was revered in the public eye, he grew weary of aiding mundanes. He sought out the curious magical energy source that had invaded Britain months after the war started. Thus, Albus met Gellert.

Over the course of a few months, Gellert and Albus discussed many things. They discussed the fact that mundanes were an utterly pitiful race. Mundanes deserved nothing other than to be under the boot of a magical. Albus agreed whole-heartedly with Gellert. They came up with plans to subvert forces from battles in order to lengthen the war. They would need as much time as possible to secure their lordships over Europe.

A year passed, much was done to ascertain their power. They trained together, creating new powerful spells to be used against the mundanes. They grew closer with each passing day. The odd and awkward friendship between the two men soon developed into something like a faux kinship. They worked together to bind a phoenix to Dumbledore in order to increase their powers. Once completed, they used the phoenix to call another of its kind so that they could bind it to Grindelwald.

After awhile, the two men started to share embarrassed glances at each other. They started to realize that they were beginning to admire the other for more than just their power. Those who say, "War breeds romance," were right. Dumbledore announced his growing affection for Gellert one night during a planning session. Gellert admitted to feeling a similar attraction to Dumbledore as well. They solidified their attraction towards each other that night after a few hours of talking.

The two of them were inseparable afterwards. Realizing that Britain's downfall was a lost cause, they both fled to Germany. Hitler was immediately curious towards Albus' presence. He would have had Albus killed right there on the spot, had Gellert not admitted his usefulness to the both of them. Albus assured Hitler that he would and could help him obtain dominance over Europe. Albus became Hitler's left hand man, where Gellert resumed his post as Hitler's right hand man.

With Albus and Gellert now aiding the Third Reich, The Nazis began to push farther into Russia and Africa. Germany received aid with the encroaching Russian forces when Japan decided to join the fight. The new player on the Axis side was a welcome relief. However, the attack on Pearl Harbor gave the Allies a major boost in forces thanks to America. Hitler was beginning to worry about the war. Fighting on two fronts is difficult enough, being outnumbered on both sides only makes it harder.

Albus and Gellert knew a sinking ship when they saw one. They abandoned Hitler in his greatest time of need. They fled back to Britain to see if there was a way to put their plan into motion. When they landed on British soil, they were confronted by two people, Aberforth and Ariana Dumbledore. Aberforth tried to dissuade Albus from the path that he was currently taking. Ariana pleaded with her older brother to stop his foolishness and come back home with them.

Gellert sensed hesitation in Albus. He whispered evils in Albus' ear. Aberforth is trying to take your power for himself. Ariana is a hindrance to the master plan. Upon hearing these evils, Albus attacked his brother with Gellert's aid. Aberforth held his own for as long as he could. He knew he would be beaten. He was on an even footing with his brother, but Gellert was an unknown. Ariana shouted for them to stop their fighting only to be forever silenced by a stray spell sent by Dumbledore.

Dumbledore froze when Ariana's body hit the ground. Everything around him stopped. In a moment of intense grief, Albus Dumbledore did the impossible. He stopped time. Till this day, no one knows how, nor can anyone repeat, how Dumbledore stopped time. He was brought out of his stupor when his spell failed. His brother, abandoning magic, punched Albus square in the face. The punch seemed to jog Dumbledore's mind into the right way of thinking.

Albus teamed up with Aberforth and defeated Gellert in a duel. Gellert's phoenix abandoned his cruel master during the midst of the fight. The combined magic of Albus and Aberforth destroyed the bond between Gellert and his phoenix. Albus claimed Gellert's wand as his prize for the duel. Aberforth took Ariana's body and left without a single word said towards Albus. Gellert was sentenced to life imprisonment inside of a prison built of his own design. Albus' actions after Gellert's incarceration were that of a crazed man. He lost everything that day, his sister, his brother, and his lover. Albus swore to the heavens that he would do anything and everything to repent for what he did. He would do all of this, for the greater good.

Many years later Albus' testimony, to do things for the greater good, would be tested to its limits. He somehow convinced the latest heir of the founders to return. It took a lot of persuasion on his part. In fact, he wasn't sure himself how he was able to convince them to go.

One night, they were adamant on staying away from Britain. The next night, as if a coin had flipped differently, they were all for returning to Britain.

Dumbledore could only find the current heir of Gryffindor and Ravenclaw though. They were hard to find. One couple, the Potters, was currently enjoying a secluded lifestyle in a manor overlooking a grape plantation. The other couple, The Devons, was taking a cross-country trip as a fifth anniversary. He convinced them to return, stating that the bigotry of Britain would end during his lifetime. Neither couple knew that Dumbledore would live long enough for them to pass on and leave many generations after them. Both couples' lines diverged so far away from each other, that when a certain Robert Potter married a Felicia Devon it was not widely known of their combined heritage, only Dumbledore knew. Their son James Potter grew up not knowing of his legacy from Gryffindor and Ravenclaw.

Dumbledore, for the life of him, could not find the heirs of Slytherin and Hufflepuff. They virtually disappeared from all forms of tracking. He researched the family tree of the Hufflepuff and Slytherin line. Both trees ended at the third generation of life. He could not figure out why it ended so suddenly. There were no reports of any of the names on the list dying. Someone or something really wanted the Hufflepuff-Slytherin line to remain hidden. Therefore, Albus did what any person would do in that event. He would make up his results. That's what everyone would do, right? Either way, He forged the documents for the legacies. Hufflepuff line had developed into the Lestrangle family tree. The Slytherin line had developed into Gaunt family tree. With the magical documents created, all heirs believed that either family's blood was their own. Only the goblins knew otherwise. The Hufflepuff vault and Slytherin vault were sealed until the true heir could be found.

Dumbledore siphoned some of the contents of either Founder's vault into the vaults of the respective families. He did this before the goblins could lock down the two vaults. This event was blacklisted from goblin records. It was not a very proud moment in many of the guard's lives. They had somehow let a single man into two vaults that he did not own. The only reason given, "I'm simply distributing the wealth of two deceased lines." It wasn't until after Dumbledore left that the goblins found out the both lines were faked into the

wrong families and that the true families were not dead. Goblins had much better records than humans did.

With all of Dumbledore's plans going accordingly, he was able to finally enjoy a moment of relaxation. It had been many years since he was denied access to either of the vaults. He was now serving as the Transfiguration teacher at Hogwarts. He had accepted the position on the grounds of teaching young minds. His true reasons were to find out the secrets that the founders had placed into the school. He knew of the secrets from the past through a very secure source, the paintings of past headmasters and headmistresses. His mind grew focused on the act of finding out the school's secrets. He became blind to the students around him.

Dumbledore was a very brilliant man. Brilliance and madness are two sides of the same coin as they say. Those with a brilliant mind will understand another brilliant mind with ease. Those with an average mind will believe those who are brilliant are in fact mad. One such student with a brilliant mind graced the school during Dumbledore's fiftieth anniversary of teaching at Hogwarts. He understood Dumbledore's ramblings and ranting as if he were speaking plain English. Those around him thought they were both mad. Dumbledore, however, could not see the boy for what he truly was. He would later regret the idea of refusing the boy's wishes later on in life when he had to face him in combat. The boy's name was Tom Marvolo Riddle.

Tom Riddle was a lonely boy. He grew up in an orphanage after his father left his mother and his mother died during childbirth. He grew up hated for his differences. The mundane children of the orphanage constantly ridiculed him for the strange occurrences that surrounded him. Tom would take the ridicule thrown at him. He did this because he knew what would eventually befall the children of his orphanage. He smiled as they threw vulgarities at him. He would enact his plan that night.

When the cloudy sky occluded the full moon's light, he ventured from his bed. He covered each boy's face with a cloth covered in ether. When their kicking stopped and they stilled, he dragged each boy out into the front yard of the orphanage. He used his wand that he received from Diagon Alley to transfigure small sticks into large stakes that he planted deeply into the ground. He was able to do so without detection by using a ward stone to obscure magical traces.

He purchased this in Knocturn Alley, the darker side of the magical stores of Diagon Alley.

Once the stakes were put in place, he levitated the students against the stakes and tied ropes around them. Once finished, he woke the children up from their ether-induced sleep. They roused and immediately looked around for clues as to where they were. Tom's high-pitched laugh brought their attention to the thirteen-year-old boy. He told them that they were to stay there until they agreed to stop bullying him. He turned the tables on the bullies. The bully became the bullied and visa versa.

The boy's quickly apologized for everything they did. They said that they would leave him alone for as long as he was at the orphanage. Tom shook his head, "That's not good enough!" The boys pleaded forgiveness. Tom shook his head once more. He let out a shrill whistle into the night. He then grew silent as a low growl could be heard from the bushes to the left of the boys. The boys turned their frightened eyes towards the shaking bush. Tom let out another loud cackle as a werewolf jumped from the bushes and strode towards him.

Tom nodded towards the tied up boys. The werewolf smiled as it turned towards the boys. It walked slowly and menacingly towards the boys, saliva dripping from its jaws. A few of the boys wet themselves in fear of what was to come. They all somehow knew that this was their last night on earth. A few of higher faith began to recite Christian rites. The werewolf staggered a bit at the holy words. Tom silenced the religious, allowing the wolf continue its advance.

Those who were not silenced screamed at the top of their lungs when the werewolf tore into the first boy. Blood splattered those who were tied up. The werewolf took perverse pleasure in slowly killing the boys. He made sure they stayed alive long enough to see their heart torn out of their chest. The first boy fell limp against his stake. The others passed out in fear only to be woken by the intense pain of ripping flesh and breaking bone. It took the werewolf an agonizing hour to tear the hearts out of the seven boys.

Tom thanked the wolf for its services that night. After the wolf left, Tom adopted a look of pure innocence and horror. He screamed at the top of his lungs as he ran inside the orphanage. He took the stone engraved with a silencing charm from the door as he ran to

the matron's room. He cried as he pulled her from her bed and out to the front lawn. He babbled on about hearing some screams. He saw that the other beds in the boy's room were empty. He cried when he told her he went outside. He said he found them tied to posts and missing their hearts.

The matron called the police, fearing for the safety of her remaining charges. The police arrived, took the bodies to the morgue, and took Tom's testimony. At first, they thought that it was the work of some sort of sick cult. That changed when they found that the bodies were torn into by some sort of animal based on the claw and teeth marks. They thought a wolf did this. They threw that theory out the window quickly enough based on the size of the marks. No wolf grew to be the size of a human. With little to no evidence, they abandoned the case.

Tom's school life was quite similar to his life at the orphanage. He would get picked on by all of the purebloods because of being from an orphanage. He retaliated in a similar fashion to the students. It was nowhere near as drastic, but just as effective. He tortured some students to gain the necessary fear requirement of obedience from others. He quickly formed a group of lackeys devoted to him. He called his group Death Eaters.

Even though Tom no longer had enemies back at the orphanage, he still hated the place. He pleaded with Dumbledore to allow him to stay at Hogwarts over the summer. He asked if he could become his apprentice while he stayed over the summers. Dumbledore solemnly shook his head and told Tom that he would need to go to the orphanage. Dumbledore did this because there was a mad beast roaming the halls of Hogwarts. It had already claimed its first victim, one Elisabeth Myrtle.

Tom reluctantly returned to his orphanage every year until his graduation from Hogwarts. He then started on a long arduous process of becoming immortal. He succeeded somewhat during his schooling and only strengthened it after his graduation. Once he had significant strength, he began his path of conquest of Britain. Dumbledore formed his own army against Tom. To others Tom Marvolo Riddle was known as Lord Voldemort. His reign of terror spread across all of Britain.

Albus' army clashed with Voldemort for two years. Neither army gained any ground on the other. However, morale was low on the side of the light. Dumbledore would send people out on missions but would not give them any more information than what was needed to survive. Sometimes, that was not enough. Albus' missions caused a lot of deaths on the side of the light. More deaths than the dark side had suffered.

It was nearing a point when some people were beginning to think that Dumbledore was not the great strategist that others thought he was. Dumbledore always seemed to be holding information back from his troops. A simple snippet of information could mean life or death for a soldier. Dumbledore was hoarding all of the information. Knowing if the building you were going into was rotting and nearly collapsed meant you didn't go in. Not knowing this meant you walked in, and a well-placed trap caused the building to fall on top of you.

It started to seem hopeless for either side to gain ground in the war. It wasn't until Dumbledore let a little snippet of information be overheard, did the war finally end. A Death Eater was stealthily listening in on a conversation between Dumbledore and an unknown person. He learned information that would be crucial for his master. Once this Death Eater relayed the information, Voldemort set on the path to use that information to its fullest.

Voldemort studied the information that was given to him for days. He later found out that the information involved a possible end to the war. Only two families had the necessary requirements to meet each aspect of the information. Voldemort sent his most trusted lieutenant to one possible location. After he did this, he set out to the second possible location. Both places had been caught unawares. Voldemort's lieutenant was not successful in her mission. However, she did leave a child orphaned to his grandmother, one Neville Longbottom.

Voldemort also met with abject failure at his target. He was tasked with the termination of a family. A task he set himself to do personally. His trusted follower gave him the location of the home of his enemy. He broke into the home and immediately killed the man who stood up to him. The man's wife ran when her husband called for her to run. She ran upstairs, tears in her eyes. She knew her husband would not make it out of the conflict alive. She reached her

son, but it was too late. Voldemort burst into the room and leveled his wand with her. He commanded her to move aside, said she would be useful to him. She refused outright, saying she would die before turning her son over to him. He smiled a sickeningly sweet smile before he killed her. He then leveled his wand to the baby. After a flash of green, the Dark Lord was no more. The house and its occupants were destroyed, save for one small crying bundle. That fateful Halloween night, Lily and James Potter died defending their child, Harry Potter, from Voldemort.

The baby was later discovered by a giant of a man. Another man arrived on the scene but quickly left to deal with the traitor of the family. The giant man moved the blanket out of the way of the baby's face. He saw a deep lightning bolt shaped scar on the baby's forehead. Later that night, the boy would be left on the doorstep of a small family in the middle of a mundane community. A stern Scottish woman would argue with an aging man about the family's morality. She would be denied her attempts to have the boy stay with another family. The boy would grow up hated and abused. He would later become the hero that he was meant to be, his friends at his side during the coming tribulations.

All over Britain, people would celebrate their freedom from the darkness. They would toast their glasses to the victor over the Dark Lord. He would be adored for years to come. He would be sought after by all those in political power. He would be the dream of every young witch for years. He would be a hero among heroes. He would be remembered for his greatest deeds.

The child, however, would only remember sadness and sorrow. He would remember how his parents were good for nothing drunks that died in a car crash. He would be teased because of his scar. He would grow up without friends. After all, who wanted to be friends with a freak? He would later find out that his whole life had been a lie. He would learn that there were people in the world that care for him. He would learn that he was Harry Potter, The-Boy-Who-Lived.

(A/N): Okay, lots of stuff in this chapter. I think Professor Binns would be proud. I hope this chapter didn't bore too many of you. I know some things were repeated in this chapter but that was intentional and used for emphasis. I'll let you all infer as to who the two remaining champions of the founders are, though it does seem quite obvious. Anyways, I hope you liked it. See you next time for

another exciting chapter of Harry Potter HSS. This is Kunaiswarm, signing off. Ciao.

Edit: Okay, I've had more negative reviews so far about this chapter than positive ones, so I'm going to take my time writing the next chapter. I promise I won't do more history. I thought that you guys would like it, apparently not. Whatever, I did say you didn't have to read it. So, it's your fault just as much as it is mine.

A/N I am so sorry everyone, I've had this chapter done for about a week now. I'm only just getting to it now because of all the stories I'm reading and writing. I've read all of your reviews and thank all of you for reading my story. I understand that some of you didn't like the last chapter. I just have this to say, oh well. I liked it, it explained a lot about my story and why things are the way they are. Besides, I was trying something that I saw in other stories. It failed miserably according to some of you. It was a slight, to a major, success for some of you. I won't be doing a chapter like that again. There is quite a bit that happens in this chapter to advance the plot. As always, most of this isn't mine. It belongs to J. K. Rowling. Although I do claim responsibility to a few things that I have mentioned earlier.

Things to know:

"Blah" - Regular speech.

Blah - thoughts.

"Blah" - Mental communication.

On with the show.

The weekend came for Harry quicker than he expected. Granted he only had school for three days before the weekend started, he was still generally surprised. Wednesday and Thursday seemed to last a lot longer than normal for him. Friday's classes were passed by with nothing major happening in any of them, although, Ron did seem to be getting hurt a lot by having Seamus as a partner. Harry was just glad that he had some time to relax after coming to school. It seemed like a nonstop roller coaster ride to him.

Harry was sitting in the Great Hall eating breakfast when Oliver Wood walked up to him. He was confused as to what Oliver could want with him. Then he remembered that he still hadn't had his first Quidditch practice with him. He rather enjoyed watching Malfoy glare at him for not having been expelled. He wished he wasn't the center of attention all of the time, but if he couldn't do anything about it, then he wouldn't worry too much. Oliver approached the Hufflepuff table where everyone was currently sitting at and handed Harry a slip of paper. He eyed Susan and Hannah before he gave the note to Harry. He then beat a hasty retreat back to the Gryffindor table.

"What do you suppose that was all about Harry?" Hermione asked as she looked at the folded up piece of parchment in Harry's hand.

"I think it might have something to do with Quidditch." Harry said as he opened up the note. He then nodded his head and turned the note so that Hermione could read it. "Yup, Quidditch practice tonight."

"How will you be able to practice? You don't even have a broom yet," Hermione said as she took the note.

"I don't know. Maybe I'll just borrow a school broom. Although, Aunt Minnie did say she might be getting me a broom." Harry looked towards the staff table and saw McGonagall eyeing the window where the mail came from.

Harry turned his attention to the window that McGonagall was watching. He then saw the usual flock of owls fly in with mail for the students. He then saw two barn owls carrying a rather long brown package. Hedwig was flying close behind the two owls. When Harry noticed the owls were bound for him, he cleared a space in front of him for the owls to drop their package. The two barn owls deposited their package in front of Harry followed closely by Hedwig's small note. Hermione took the note when Harry handed it for her to read while he opened the large package.

"Harry, don't!" Hermione said rather loudly.

"What?" Harry had already ripped some of the packaging off, revealing the handle of a broom.

"Professor McGonagall wants you to open your package in private." Hermione whispered.

"Alright, I'll just cover it back up and take it to the common room. We can open it there." Harry said. He could hardly conceal his glee. He had noticed the handle monogrammed with the words Nimbus 2000.

Harry looked up towards McGonagall to see her gently petting Hedwig. She turned her attention to Harry for a second and smiled at him. Harry smiled back before turning his attention towards the

broom. He was about to take the package and head back to his common room when another voice sounded out and stopped him.

"Oi, Potter, is that a Nimbus 2000 I see there?" Ron shouted from Gryffindor table to Hufflepuff table.

Honestly, doesn't this boy know the definition of tact? "I don't know what you're talking about Ronald." Harry said as he calmly returned to his food.

"Don't lie to me Potter. I saw the writing on the handle. You got yourself a broom." Ron sneered.

All the way from Gryffindor table, I highly doubt that. Harry saw an imperceptible glance from Ron to someone behind him. Harry turned slowly around and saw Draco rise from his seat and walk over to Hufflepuff table. He raised an eyebrow in confusion before turning back to his food. Was Ron working with Draco? Now that's weird. Ron usually hates anything to do with Slytherin. Why would the two of them be working together?

"So you got yourself a broom, eh Potter?" Draco said from behind Harry.

"Yeah I did, my room at home gets a little dusty so I bought this to clean it up. It's a shame it arrived so late. Now I'll have to keep it here at school until I can take it home with me." Harry turned to see Draco scowling at Ron. Wait, Ron? I just gave Draco a sarcastic remark, yet Draco is mad at Ron. Harry was thoroughly confused.

"You're not allowed brooms in first year Potter. It says so in the Hogwarts letter." Ron said. He then noticed Professor Flitwick walking towards the staff table. "Professor Flitwick, Potter's got himself a broom."

"Yes, that he does. I do believe it's a Nimbus 2000, am I correct?" Professor Flitwick looked towards Harry.

"Yes sir," Harry said as he placed his hand on the long brown package on the table.

"Excellent, this years Quidditch tournament will be quite entertaining." Professor Flitwick smiled before he left for the staff table.

"Well, I guess that answers both of your questions boys." Daphne said as she stood from the table.

Harry noticed another imperceptible nod from Ron. Was Ron the mastermind behind all of their plans? I would assume that Malfoy would be, since he is smarter than Ron is, I think. Harry wondered what they could be thinking now. He sighed as he waited for one of them to take the lead.

"I challenge you to a wizards duel." Malfoy said vehemently.

"Why?" Harry asked.

"Weasley will be my second." Malfoy said, obviously going off some sort of mental script. He caught himself before looking confused. "Wait, what did you say?"

"I asked you, why you wanted to challenge me to a wizards duel." Harry repeated.

"You have insulted my honor."

"How did I do that?" Harry asked.

"Just accept the duel Potter." Ron had walked over to the Hufflepuff table so as not to be overheard.

"Where and when?" Harry said after a sigh.

"Trophy room, tonight, after curfew." Ron said. "Who's your second?"

"Don't want one," Harry said, shaking his head.

"You have to have a second." Ron sputtered.

"I don't plan on dieing during a duel involving two first years." Harry said nonchalantly.

"Fine, just don't be late." Ron said as he left the Great Hall with Draco.

"Okay, why are they friendly with each other all of a sudden? I thought they hated each other." Harry asked.

"No idea," Hermione shrugged as she watched them leave. "Let's go have a look at your broom Harry." She turned towards the group.

"Yes, let's," Harry smiled as he picked up his package and left the Great Hall.

Once the group had settled down in Harry's common room, Harry tore into the package fervently. Bits and pieces of brown wrapping paper were tossed about the room. Once the broom was free of wrapping, Harry held it in his hands. He had always wanted a broom, well ever since he went into Quality Quidditch Supplies that is. The Nimbus 2000 was a great broom. He was itching to fly it.

"Are you going to fly that thing or what?" Tracey asked. She was almost as excited as Harry was.

"I wish I could Tracey, but I have a pressing matter that I must attend to." Harry said as he placed the broom down on the table.

"What is this pressing matter that you must attend to?" Hermione asked. She had been trying to suppress a chuckle when Harry tore into the package with reckless abandon. He was like a child at Christmas.

"I want to go and talk with Hagrid." Harry said as he sat down in the chair behind him.

"Isn't Hagrid that large fellow that we saw when getting off the train?" Neville asked.

"That's him," Harry said as he nodded. "I promised him that I would talk to him more about my parents and other things when I got to school. Besides, there's something else I want to ask him." Harry paused as he contemplated his thoughts. "I wanted to ask him about the break in at Gringotts."

"Does he know something about it?" Hermione asked.

"I don't know, but I've already asked Aunt Minnie and Professor Snape." Harry shrugged.

"Is that what you did when you disappeared after dinner yesterday?" Daphne asked.

"Yeah, I was curious. I still have all of my parents' things in Gringotts. I don't want them to get stolen." Harry ran his hand through his hair. "They didn't know anything about it though. Either that or they didn't want to tell me."

"What makes you think Hagrid will tell you anything?" Blaise asked nonchalantly.

"Hagrid is a good guy. However, he tends to talk faster than his brain thinks. Don't get me wrong, his heart is in the right place. He just tends to blurt out things he shouldn't." Harry said.

"So you're going to try and trick some information out of him?" Susan asked.

"Sort of," Harry said as he made a so-so motion with his hand. "I'm going to engage him in conversation and bring the topic up."

"Isn't that a little mean?" Hannah asked.

"Yeah, I suppose your right." Harry said as he lowered his head. "It's just, something about this break in really bugs me."

"I think it disturbs a lot of people Harry, not just you." Hermione said.

"Normally I wouldn't give two Knuts for information about something in the Daily Prophet. A lot of it is a load of hogwash. Something about this irks me to no end."

"Alright Harry we get it, you want to know why someone broke into Gringotts." Susan said as she lay back against her chair.

Harry didn't want to tell his friends the real reason why he wanted to know about the Gringotts break in. He sort of felt responsible for the break in, even though he knew nothing about it. The goblins set him up as the hero of their race. How could he be their hero if he can't

stop burglars? He would need to find out a lot more about them in order to fulfill their prophecy. He didn't even know why he didn't want to tell his friends about the prophecy. He trusted them enough with the information. He knew about Legilimency and those who practiced it. Suddenly an idea flashed in Harry's head.

"I got to go." Harry said quickly as he ran for the portrait opening. Harry left so quickly that his friends barely had time to register him leave.

"What was that about?" Hermione asked.

"Maybe he really had to use the loo." Neville said as he shrugged. The group nodded slowly as they watched the portrait slowly swing itself shut.

Harry couldn't believe he didn't think about it two days ago. It was staring him right in the face the entire time that day. Well only for the last remainder of the day, but it was still there. He ran down towards the dungeons, apologizing to Professor Flitwick along the way for running in the halls. He reached the potions classroom and opened the door. He gently knocked on it as he remembered his manners. He looked around but saw no one in the room. He wondered where Professor Snape could be. He then noticed a house elf cleaning in the corner of the room.

"Excuse me. Do you know where Professor Snape is?" Harry asked.

The house elf looked up from her work and saw Harry in the room. She looked embarrassed for a second. Harry wondered why. After all, she was only doing her job. Harry was the one who should feel bad for interrupting her.

"Professor Snape should still be in the professors' lounge."

"Thank you, and sorry for interrupting your work," Harry said.

"You do not need to apologize. I should not have been seen in the first place."

"Thanks again." Harry said. He felt bad about disturbing her while she worked.

"You are welcome." The house elf bowed before she returned to her duty.

Harry gently closed the door before walking towards the professors' lounge. He had to stop and ask a portrait for directions when he realized that he had no clue where the room was. He quickened his pace when he found out that he was on the wrong side of the school. He reached the room about ten minutes later because of an annoying set of stairs. He gently knocked on the door and waited to be called in. When he was called, he slowly opened the door.

"Mr. Potter, to what do I owe the pleasure." Professor Snape said with an air of sarcasm hanging on every word.

"Professor Snape, I was hoping I could ask you a question." Harry said as he closed the door behind him. He noticed that the room was empty. Professor Snape was sitting in a corner of the room with a handful of essays to grade.

"You may," Snape said as he set his papers down.

"You know the art of Legilimency, correct?"

"You should know that Mr. Potter, unless you have forgotten the events of your first night here."

"Sorry sir, I was just trying to make sure." Harry bowed his head apologetically.

"I assume that is not all that you wished to ask me Mr. Potter."

"Do you know the defense to Legilimency as well sir?"

"Of course I do. You do not learn one without learning the other." Snape said as if this were common knowledge.

"Would it be too much trouble for you to teach me and my friends Occlumency?"

"I sincerely hope you did not mean for me to teach you this very moment, I am quite busy. Also, the process of learning Occlumency is quite arduous and time consuming."

"Of course, only when you have free time." Harry said quickly.

"May I ask why you wish for me to teach you the art of defending one's mind from outside attacks."

"There are two reasons actually." Harry said as he held up his hand. "The first, I believe someone in this school has tried to attack my mind, and not just for information." Harry remembered the morning he was mentally attacked during breakfast. "The second, I wish for my friends to be able to occlude their memories from ... someone." Harry had almost said Dumbledore's name.

"Am I correct to assume that you wish to hide your thoughts as well as your friends' thoughts from our esteemed headmaster?"

Harry slowly nodded his head. He didn't want to lie to Professor Snape. "I know I shouldn't feel the need to hide anything from Headmaster Dumbledore. I just haven't found a reason not to."

"I see," Snape said as he folded his arms in thought. "Who attacked your mind during breakfast two days ago?"

"How did you know when it was?" Harry asked.

"Light Legilimency," Snape stated as if he were commenting on the weather. "You have shields but you have no idea how to use them. It was fairly easy to get to your surface thoughts."

"Hmm, last time Headmaster Dumbledore tried to read me, he wasn't able to get anything."

"Perhaps you got lucky. Even an under trained person such as yourself can garner in a few lucky hits."

"That's why I want this training. I don't want to be the subject of random Legilimency attacks." Harry said as he sighed.

"No need to get aggravated Potter." Snape said as his lips curled.

"Sorry sir, it's been a long week."

"I gathered," Snape rolled his eyes at Harry. He then motioned for Harry to sit opposite him. When Harry sat down, Snape leaned

forward and folded his hands under his chin. "There are two methods to learn Occlumency."

"What are they?" Harry asked, leaning forward a little bit.

"The first method is through brute force." Snape rolled his eyes when Harry looked confused. "It involves a trained Legilimancer to attack your mind until any available shields shatter. Afterwards, the one learning Occlumency must try to reconstruct those shields around their mind. This is done to get a better understanding of both fields at the same time." Snape sneered at Harry before continue, "Though I would learn everything that you wish to keep from Dumbledore."

"What's the other way?" Harry asked as he shook his head.

"The other way is not a favored way amongst those wishing to learn Occlumency." Snape had a distant look in his eyes, as if remembering a painful memory. "It involves shedding all emotions and learning to think of nothing. It must be done during all hours of the day. It is the quicker route to learning Occlumency. Unfortunately, there is a chance that you will no longer have any emotions."

"Why is that?" Harry asked, suddenly afraid.

"Occlumency establishes shields around a person's mind. If you abandon your emotions while establishing these shields, you will no longer be able to let in the emotions. Your mind will think they are a foreign entity attempting access. The shields will destroy them on contact."

"Why in the world would anyone want to do that then?"

"Some people would rather feel nothing rather than knowing they can not keep secrets from their enemies." Snape said through a heavy breath.

"So you would feel nothing then? You wouldn't feel hatred, anger, sadness, anxiety?" Harry asked.

"No emotion would be able to break through the shields." Snape reiterated.

"But, you wouldn't feel the good emotions either. You wouldn't be able to experience joy, happiness, or love." Harry said desperately.

"Mr. Potter, know that I am not forcing you to choose the second option." Snape said. "I agree with you. Losing your emotions for the sake of guarding a secret is too heavy a price to pay."

"Professor, it sounds as if you're speaking from experience." Harry said. "Is that how you learned Occlumency?"

"Mr. Potter, I am quite capable of feeling my emotions." Snape said with a sneer. "However, I do know of others who have learned the art through those methods."

"I'm sorry for asking professor." Harry hung his head low.

"Which method would you like to use in order to learn Occlumency?" Snape asked curtly.

"Neither," Harry said lowly. "I don't want others to know my life, and I also don't want to lose what little I have left of it just to hide it."

Snape sighed as he pinched the bridge of his nose tiredly. He really needed to get back to grading the essays in front of him. "Mr. Potter, there is a third way to learn Occlumency."

"Really, what is it?" Harry asked as he looked up at Snape.

"It is a method used by muggles in order to achieve something they refer to as state of enlightenment."

"You mean meditation?" Harry asked.

"Yes Mr. Potter that is exactly what I mean."

"How is that different than the second method you told me about?"

"The second method involves emptying your mind. This third method does not rid you of anything. You only think of nothing. Once you achieve this, you can start to build up your shields around your mind."

"I don't think I would be able to think of nothing." Harry then rubbed his temples. "Just thinking about it makes my head hurt."

Snape sneered once more. "I assumed that would be the case. However, that is the only other method that I know of. That is how I learned Occlumency."

"I've used meditation to organize my thoughts before." Harry said slightly angry.

"Calm down Mr. Potter." Snape said. "Those are your choices. Either you choose, or you don't. I do not care." Snape then returned to his essays.

Harry assumed the conversation was over. "Thank you professor, I will try your method to learn Occlumency." Harry stood to leave. When he reached the door, Snape stopped him.

"Mr. Potter, if you do use this method, I must warn you." Snape said. Harry turned back to him. "If you use this method, there is a chance that something else could happen."

"What would that be?" Harry asked hesitantly.

"If you feel any primal urges, stop your meditation immediately."

"What do you mean by primal urges?" Harry asked.

"Are you familiar with the seven deadly sins?" Snape asked.

"Yeah, they're greed, lust, gluttony, sloth, envy, wrath, and pride." Harry said as he counted them off on his fingers.

"Correct Mr. Potter. If you feel any of these or any variation of these, you are to stop your meditation for the day." Snape warned.

"Yes sir," Harry nodded his head before he turned to leave the room.

Harry slowly closed the door behind him, lost in thought. He wondered what would happen if he continued to meditate if he thought of those emotions. He filed that question away to be asked later. For now, he wanted to go visit Hagrid and ask him about the

break in at Gringotts. After he went back to his common room to grab his friends, he would head over to Hagrid's hut.

Harry walked slowly along the path to his common room. A few people greeted Harry. He muttered replies in return. Harry couldn't help but think back to Snape's warning. He knew he would get his answer later, but it just kept nagging him. He was so lost in thought that he nearly bumped into Blaise. Harry stopped abruptly and looked around. Everyone was standing in the common room looking at him.

"You alright there mate?" Neville asked.

"Yeah, you almost walked right into me." Blaise said.

"Sorry, I was just thinking." Harry muttered.

"Why did you run off suddenly?" Hermione asked. "I thought you wanted to go visit Hagrid."

"I did, I mean I do." Harry said quickly. "I just suddenly thought of something that I needed to take care of."

"Do you want to share with the rest of us?" Daphne asked.

Harry nodded his head before he spoke to them. "I wanted to tell you all something really important. I was about to, but I remembered that Dumbledore could just pluck that little bit of information out of your heads like fruit from a basket. I wanted to make sure that the information would be kept safe. I then remembered that, even though I have Occlumency shields, I don't know how to use them." Harry paused for a breath.

"Go on," Daphne said.

"Well, I went down to Professor Snape's classroom to ask him a question but he wasn't there."

"What did you want to ask Professor Snape?" Tracey asked.

"I'm getting to that," Harry held up a hand to stop further questions. "I needed to ask him something, but he wasn't there. I then went to

the staff room when I learned that he was there. When I got there, I asked him about learning Occlumency."

"But you already know Occlumency." Susan asked with a confused look on her face.

"I do, but I don't know how to use it." Harry said pointedly. "I asked him if he could teach Occlumency to us. He said he didn't have a lot of free time to waste on us." Harry held up his hands when they were about to argue. "Relax, I understand him completely. He's a teacher, meaning he's busy with his work. However, he did tell me of a way to learn Occlumency on our own."

"Do tell," Hannah asked.

"It involves meditation." Harry said.

"You mean what we did a couple nights back?" Neville asked.

Harry nodded his head, "Although, we go much deeper next time around." Harry looked around at everyone before he continued. "There is a danger to this process though."

"Of course, I would be concerned if there wasn't." Hermione said.

"Right," Harry said. "He said that if we feel any one of the emotions involving the seven deadly sins that we must stop immediately."

"What are the seven deadly sins?" Daphne asked.

"The seven deadly sins are a reference to evil emotions from early Christianity." Hermione said as she raised a finger. "These emotions are related to the evils inside of us all and are usually associated with hell or the devil."

"What are these sins?" Blaise asked.

"The sins are envy, gluttony, greed, lust, pride, sloth, and wrath." Hermione said.

"That sounds simple enough." Tracey said.

"Ah, but you see, you just thought of one of them right now." Harry said. When Tracey turned her attention back to him, he continued. "You just thought of an emotion related to pride."

"You can't think of any emotion related to them either?" Tracey asked.

"That's impossible," Neville said.

"Relax. You aren't supposed to think of anything." Harry said as he held up his hands. "The process involves thinking about nothing. The less you think the less you feel." Harry then lowered his hands. "He only told me that you might feel them, not that you would think them." Harry then frowned, "Although, he didn't tell why we shouldn't think about them."

"I think I read about something involving primal emotions in a transfiguration book." Hermione said as she raced back to her room. She came back a couple minutes later with a black leather-bound tome. "I was right, it's right here in this book."

Harry craned his head to read the title. "Shape Shifting: A Guide to Becoming an Animagus. Isn't that NEWT level magic?"

"Yes, it is Harry." Hermione said as she sat the tome down and turned to the first few pages. "It says here that one of the ways to learn the art of becoming an animagus is to clear your mind of all thoughts and focus on primal emotions."

"Are there any other ways?" Harry asked.

"Learning to become an animagus is an extremely difficult form of magic. I do not think that you would be able to learn it before sixth year." Hermione said.

"I'm just curious." Harry said. "I don't want to learn it," yet.

"Well, there are a few different ways to learn the magic. One way is the way I just mentioned. A second way is to meditate while surrounded by nature. If you do this, you can find pieces of nature. These pieces of nature, if put in a potion, assist in the transformation. This process is known as The Token Process. Either way is a viable solution to the process. The third process takes place on something

called a dreamscape. It involves delving into your own subconscious mind. It feels like a dream in which you confront your spirit animal. Once you confront the animal, you must either defeat it or gain its trust. Once done, you can become that animal."

"Well, my brain is officially full for the morning." Harry said. "Want to go see Hagrid now?"

"Let me put my book away first." Hermione said as she retreated to her room.

When Hermione returned, the group gathered their things and headed towards the grounds. Despite the fact that there was not a single cloud in the sky, it was a rather brisk morning. The group made their way down a small beaten path towards the gamekeepers hut. Harry stepped up to the door knocked a few times. As soon as he did so, he heard a large booming bark come from the other side of the door.

"Get back fang!" Hagrid yelled inside. He opened the door and smiled when he saw Harry standing there. "Harry, what are yeh doin' here?"

"I just came to visit." Harry said.

"All of yeh came just teh visit me?" Hagrid asked, rather dumbfounded.

"Yeah," Harry said. "Do you mind if we come in?"

"O' course," Hagrid said as he moved away from the door, "Though it might be a tad cramped with all of yeh in at the same time."

Despite the small size of Hagrid's quaint little home, the group managed to all fit inside. A few people were sitting shoulder to shoulder though. Hagrid soon had a large pot of water over a small cooking fire to make tea for his guests. Fang turned out to be a rather large black boarhound. He was currently resting his head in Neville's lap. Neville was gently petting Fang when Harry asked his question.

"Hey Hagrid, have you ever been to Gringotts?" Harry asked innocently.

Hagrid suddenly dropped an oven mitt when Harry asked the question. He bent down to pick it up, nearly knocking over the boiling pot of water. "What makes you think I've ever been to Gringotts?"

"I was just wondering." Harry said. "Has anyone here ever sent you to Gringotts for anything?"

"Yeah I've been there." Hagrid said as he poured the tea for everyone.

"Did you hear about the burglary at Gringotts a few days ago?" Harry asked. This earned him another bumble on Hagrid's behalf.

"Why are yeh so curious about it?" Hagrid asked.

"I just wanted to know who could have done something like that. I mean, Gringotts is supposed to be impenetrable. I wonder what they could have been after." Harry mused.

"They probably wanted the gold." Hagrid said with a wave of his hand.

"It would have been much easier to rob a person's house, rather than their vault." Harry said matter-of-factly. "It's a good thing it was emptied that morning."

"Yeah, I got lucky." Hagrid said absently.

"You were the one that emptied the vault?" Hermione asked suddenly.

"I ... well ... tha's not..." Hagrid was stuttering blindly. He then stopped and took a deep breath. "How's the tea?"

"It's very good Hagrid thanks," Harry said. "If you don't want to or can't talk about the incident, I won't press you."

"Thanks Harry," Hagrid sighed. "Please don't tell no one abou' this, yeah?"

"Don't worry Hagrid. Your secret is safe with me." Harry stood up and placed his empty cup on Hagrid's table. "Hagrid, can I ask you something?"

"As long as it ain't about Gringotts," Hagrid said.

"It isn't," Harry said as he sat back down. "You told me that you knew my parents, and that you were friends."

"Yeah, I'm really sorry about what happened that night." Hagrid said as he pulled out a handkerchief and dabbed his eyes. "I jus' wish I could see 'em again, to tell 'em I'm sorry for not bein' there."

"What if I said you could do just that?" Harry asked.

"They survived?" Hagrid asked. He looked pale. "I was there, I didn't see them. All I saw was wreckage, and you."

"No, they did die that night." Harry said solemnly. "They left behind a gift. It lets me talk to their memories. You could come with me some time. A big group of us are going tomorrow."

"Are yeh sure Harry? I wouldn't be a bother to yeh or anything?" Hagrid asked.

"Of course Hagrid, you're my friend. I still have to ask Professor Flitwick if he wanted to tag along."

"I'm sure he would. Lily was his best student. They were really close." Hagrid said as he smiled. "I'll see yeh then Harry, and please keep our secret."

"I'll be expecting you then, and I will keep our secret." Harry nodded as he got up.

Everyone else got up from their seats and placed their mugs on Hagrid's table. It was nice to just relax and have tea with friends, even if you weren't part of the conversation. When they left Hagrid's hut they hung out around the grounds. They all started to put together ideas of what could have been in the vault. They spent hours coming up with ideas more ludicrous than the last. When they heard the bell chime indicating it was now noon, they headed inside for lunch.

Everyone ate his or her lunch quickly. They all couldn't wait to see Harry on his broom. Oliver had run up to Harry saying that the practice session would be moved up a few hours. He wanted Harry to get his practice done with the entire team there. After he received the news, Harry wolfed down his meal and nearly bolted out of the Great Hall. It only took him five minutes to get his Nimbus and arrive onto the pitch, everyone headed there ahead of him.

"Harry, what are they doing here?" Wood asked. When Harry gave him a confused look, he sighed and pointed to a small group in the stands.

Harry activated the zoom on his contacts to see his friends chatting idly in the stands. "They wanted to see me flying."

"They'll give away all of our tactics." Wood said desperately.

"Relax, they won't say anything. Besides, I already told them that I was the new seeker."

"You did what?" Oliver yelled, causing everyone to turn towards them.

"Oliver, I said relax," Harry said as he held up his free hand. "They haven't told anyone about anything I've told them."

"I still don't like this Harry," Oliver said as he glared at Harry's friends.

"Please Oliver. Don't make me choose between my friends and Quidditch. I'll choose them every time." Harry said as he looked at Oliver sadly.

"Alright Harry, if you say so." Oliver said as he turned back to the team.

"Thanks Oliver." Harry said as he mounted his new broom.

"Alright you lot, I want both of you," Oliver pointed to Fred and George. "I want both of you to hound Harry with bludgers until he takes a hit. I want him to have to dodge while looking for a snitch."

"Sorry Harry, but it's for practice." Fred said as he gave a shrug.

"If you didn't do this, I'd be worried." Harry grinned at Fred.

"I want you three to try and get past me using any tactics you can think of." Oliver pointed to Alicia Spinnet, Katie Bell, and Angelina Johnson. "I do mean anything, just no wands."

"Oh, I'm sure we can think of something," Katie said as she walked up to Oliver and batted her eyelashes at him, "Right girls."

Everyone laughed when Oliver made a very audible gulp. Harry mounted his broom and hovered over to Katie.

"Katie, how are we going to play if all Oliver has on his mind are you three girls?" Harry asked.

"Y-yeah ... what he said." Oliver stammered, as his face grew red.

"Party pooper," Katie muttered as she tried to glare at Harry but failed miserably before laughing.

Oliver mounted his broom and flew up to the goal posts. He then waved Harry over. "Harry, I've enchanted a pile of golf balls over there to start flinging themselves all over the Quidditch pitch. See how many you can catch before the pile empties."

"Right," Harry said as he saw the small pile of golf balls on the ground.

Harry flew high into the air and awaited the first golf ball. No sooner than he reached his desired height did a bludger fly by, missing his head by a mere inch or two. Harry reared backwards and looked around towards the Weasley twins. He saw one of them looked slightly shocked.

"Sorry Harry. I didn't mean to hit it for your head!" Yelled either Fred or George, Harry couldn't tell who was who at this distance. Hell, I can't tell who's who when they're right in front of me.

"I wasn't really paying attention either," Harry yelled back as he returned to looking for the golf balls.

Moments later, he saw one flying a few feet from him. He darted for it and caught it in his outstretched hand. He heard a few cheers from below and smiled down to his friends. He started to hear a slightly warbled screech from behind him. He quickly flew to the side, narrowly dodging a bludger that was headed for his arm. Harry soon realized just why Fred and George were called the best beaters in school. They were demons on brooms when it came to Quidditch.

Harry was twisting, turning, diving, and rolling out of the way of bludgers more than he was looking for golf balls. Although it seemed like he was getting annoyed, or even slightly angry with the twins, he had on a huge smile. He loved Quidditch and flying through the air. It felt like freedom in the purest form of the word. Harry got a wicked grin when he heard the telltale sign of a bludger approaching from behind. With an evil idea running through his head, he slowed down slightly. He grabbed his broom tightly and wound his legs around the base of the broom, he quickly pulled back, and did a standstill back flip. The bottom of the broom connected with the bludger. Harry's little aerial maneuver sent the bludger back to one of the twins. He had enough time to look back and see either Fred or George's shocked face as they narrowly avoided the bludger.

"Whoa, time out," Yelled the other twin.

Oliver looked pissed when he flew over to the group, Angelina, Katie, and Alicia joined as well.

"Why did you call a time out? This isn't a real game. You could have just asked to stop for a second." Oliver stated.

"Did you see that move... that Harry just pulled off?" One of the twins asked, while the other finished the sentence.

"I was a little busy concentrating on the girls plays to see the three of you," Oliver said. The girls looked confused as well.

"Oh, you have to see it then. It was amazing, right George?" Fred said.

"Right you are brother of mine. Truly amazing it was." George said.

Oliver sighed as Fred and George got into position with Harry about half the distance of the field away from them.

"Ready guys," Harry called out over his shoulder.

Harry heard a quiet thump before he heard the bludger speeding towards him. He quickly gripped his broom like before. He did his stationary back flip, sending the bludger right back towards Fred and George. This time they were ready. They caught the bludger as it neared them. Harry flew back towards the group of them.

Harry laughed as he saw the four other team members jaws hanging open, "It wasn't that good, was it?"

"Not just good, really good. Bloody brilliant is actually a more accurate term." Oliver said as he smiled. "I've only seen maneuvers like that in professional games. What do you call that move?"

"I don't know. I just did it, never really thought of a name for it." Harry thought for a moment, "The best I can think of is 'The Return to Sender'." Harry laughed as he ran his hand through his hair, "Though, that seems rather lame."

"It will have to do for now." Wood said as he resumed practice.

Practice lasted for a few more hours, until there was not enough light to continue. Harry landed roughly at the edge of the Quidditch pitch. He was exhausted, and just wanted to go to bed. He stepped off his broom and draped it over his shoulders. He was about to walk into the changing room when his friends caught up to him.

"That was really wicked Harry." Neville said as he clapped him on his back.

"Thanks Neville," Harry said as he yawned. "It was really tiring though."

"Oh, no worries mate." Neville said as he looked back towards the others. "We'll meet you back in the common room."

Harry nodded his head as he walked into the changing room. Harry put his broom in his locker, headed over to the showers, and waited. Fred and George walked passed him and smiled as they thought of winning the Quidditch cup this year. Oliver walked passed and

patted Harry on the shoulder. Harry heard three showerheads turn on as he slumped down to the ground.

"Why aren't you showering?" Katie asked as she headed towards the women's showers.

"It's a long story?" Harry said as he looked up at her.

"I've got time." Katie said as she set her things down on a bench and sat down.

"Truthfully, I don't really want to talk about it." Harry said. "It's kind of personal and I don't want to be babied about it."

"Are you too shy to shower with the others?" She asked.

Angelina walked up at that moment with Alicia not too far behind her.

"Are you coming Katie?" Angelina asked.

"In a minute," Katie said as she smiled at her friends.

"Only on the team for one day and you're already hitting on him." Alicia said as she smiled. "I would have thought you would have waited at least until he's a little older."

"Oh, just go on already." Katie said. "I'm just talking to him."

"Easy Katie, I was only joking." Alicia said as she and Angelina hurried off to the women's showers.

"Now, as I was saying before we were so rudely interrupted." Katie said as she turned her attention back to Harry.

"It involves something in my past that I'm not too proud of." Harry said through a sigh.

"Did you want to talk about it?" Katie asked as she patted the spot next to her on the bench.

"I don't think talking about it will help." Harry said as he smiled up at Katie.

"Harry, one thing you should know." Katie said as she placed her hands in her lap. "Girls get good at detecting false emotions."

Harry smile fell and was replaced with a look of shame. He didn't know that much about girls, but he thought he was good at hiding his emotions. "I'm sorry," Harry said as he looked down towards the floor.

"I didn't mean it as a bad thing Harry. I'm just concerned is all," Katie said hurriedly. "I want to get to know you if you're going to be on the team."

"Planning on being the captain when Oliver graduates?" Harry said through a chuckle.

"Sort of," Katie said as she bobbed her head to one side. "Now, I don't want to force the issue, but I do want to let you know that I'll be available to talk at any time during the day."

"Just as long as it's not during classes, Quidditch practice, or bodily needs, am I right?" Harry asked as he smiled up at her.

"Now that's a genuine smile." Katie said as she smiled as well, "And yes."

"Thanks Katie, I don't know if I want to talk about it just this minute, but maybe later."

"Whenever you're ready to talk, just ask, okay?" Katie said as she gathered her things and walked towards the women's showers.

"I will," Harry said as he laid his head back against the wall.

Harry waited around twenty minutes for the guys to get done in the showers. As soon as they left, he entered the room. He quickly disrobed and stood under one of the showerheads. He was exhausted to the point where he no longer wanted to hold the glamour charm that concealed his scars. He turned on the hot water and let it flow over him. He pressed his right hand against the shower wall and dipped his head under the hot water. The water felt good as it cleansed him from his workout.

Harry shook his head slowly as he reached for a bottle of shampoo. He lathered it into his hair before rinsing it out. He slowly scrubbed his body down, careful to avoid some of the scars. Even after so many years of healing, they were still sore. He slowly ran his hand along some of the scars on his midsection. He recalled some of the times when he received the scars.

When Harry was younger, he had thought that he deserved some of the beatings he received. He would disobey his aunt and uncle when the task set before him was too great. His uncle would bring out an old leather belt and pelt him until he bled. Afterwards, Harry would finish the task. He would then retreat to his cupboard and cry himself to sleep. He later found out that no child deserved to be beaten as badly as he was. Some people believed in corporal punishment, but definitely not to that degree.

Harry was brought out of his thoughts when the water running over him turned ice cold. He quickly dried off and headed out into the locker room. He slid on a pair of boxers and pants before he started to mess with his belt. He was trying to hurry up and get back to the castle so he ended up putting his belt on incorrectly. Harry was so engrossed in dressing and heading back to the castle, he didn't hear the two other people enter the changing room.

Hermione had been waiting near the main doors to the school for Harry to return. She told the others to go on without her that she was going to wait for Harry. She looked out and saw the other members of the Quidditch team coming towards the castle. When they reached the doors, she asked where Harry was. She found out that he was still taking a shower. The next group to come up to her was the women of the team. She stopped one of them.

"Katie, where's Harry?" Hermione asked, a little bit of worry lacing her words.

"He said he didn't want to shower with the other guys. He said he wasn't shy or anything, just that he didn't want to do it." Katie said. "Why, didn't he come back yet?"

"No, and that's what has me worried." Hermione said. "If he's like other boys, he shouldn't take that long in the showers."

"Let's go see what's up then." Katie said as she headed back to the changing rooms with Hermione close behind.

"Do you think he just forgot the time?" Hermione asked as they entered the room.

"I don't think so, but it won't hurt to check on him." Katie said.

The two of them turned the corner over to the men's side of the changing room. They saw Harry facing away from them, fiddling with his belt. Then they saw the wide array of scars lining his back. The two girls gasped in unison as they backed up slightly. Harry froze in his action. He slowly turned around with a frightful look on his face. Then they saw the scars lining his front side as well. He looked like someone had put him through a meat grinder.

"It's not what you think it is." Harry said quickly as he held up his hands. Unfortunately, this caused his pants to fall down. "Stupid belt," Harry muttered as he quickly picked his pants back up.

Harry finished lacing his belt in his pants before turning back to the two girls, slightly red in the face. He sighed as he sat down. He placed his head in his hands and began to rub it slightly. After a few seconds, he offered them a seat. They hesitantly walked over and sat down on the other side of Harry.

"Do you want the full story or the abridged version?" Harry asked them emotionlessly. I guess I'll just have to get this over with won't I? I never really wanted to tell anyone. Nevertheless, they saw me. Oh well, no time like the present.

"Is this why you didn't want to shower with the other guys?" Katie asked in a whisper. She still couldn't believe what she was seeing.

"That's the main reason, yes." Harry said.

"Did you do this to yourself?" Hermione asked, afraid of the answer. Either way it was bad.

"No," Harry said. The room filled with silence until he realized that they wanted him to explain further. "My aunt, uncle, and cousin did this to me." Harry gestured over himself.

"Why in the world would anyone do such a thing?" Katie yelled.

"Some people are just like that." Harry said as he looked down to the ground. "They always gave me tasks that were too great for me to do. If I didn't do it to their liking, they would beat me. If I outright refused to do it, they would whip me. The scars on my back are ten years worth of birthday presents." Harry didn't realize that he had started to cry during his recollection of past events. "It's kind of my fault really."

"No, don't you dare think that, ever!" Hermione yelled as she shot up from her seat.

Harry looked up suddenly and saw that Hermione had tears running down her face. Katie also looked as if she were trying to hold back tears.

"If I were just a little stronger, or a little faster, maybe I could have done what they wanted to their liking." Harry said.

"Stop, just stop," Hermione said as she sat back down. "Why do you keep blaming yourself for all of this?"

"Why else would they only beat me and not their son?" Harry asked with slight scorn in his voice. He immediately realized what he did. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to yell at you."

"You have a right to be angry Harry." Katie said. "Just remember who your friends are. We'll never do anything to hurt you." Katie said. Hermione nodded in agreement.

"What else did they do?" Hermione whispered.

"Too much," Harry said quietly. "They wouldn't feed me. They would lock me up in my cupboard for weeks."

"You're what?" Hermione asked, not daring to believe what she thought she heard.

"They forced me to live in a cupboard under the stairs. It's where I spent all of my life. I was lucky to be let out to the library during the day. They didn't send me to school so I had to learn everything on

my own." Harry started to shed tears once more. He froze when he suddenly felt himself being embraced by two sets of arms.

"It's okay Harry, you have nothing to be afraid of anymore." Hermione said. "We'll protect you from those vile monsters." She finished with venom in her voice.

"Thanks," Harry said.

The three of them sat there talking for the better part of an hour before they headed back up to the castle. They ate a late supper before heading back to their common rooms.

"Katie, if you ever want to join us for a talk or anything, my common room is on the seventh floor behind the portrait of Godric Gryffindor. I'll key you in the next time you visit, just have him ask for me." Harry said.

"Alright, I'll do that." Katie said as she smiled. She opened her mouth to ask a question but Harry beat her to it.

"I'll get everyone on the team keyed in. The twins are already keyed in."

"Alright," Katie said. "Get some rest you two. It's been a long day."

Harry sighed, "It sure has."

They said their goodbyes before they headed back to their respective common rooms. Once Harry and Hermione entered the common room they found that everyone had already gone off to sleep. They were about to turn in as well when Godric stopped them.

"Word around the castle's paintings, is that you challenged young Malfoy to a duel tonight." Godric said.

Harry slapped his forehead, "I nearly forgot." He then rounded on Godric, "He challenged me, not the other way around though."

"You're still going through with it?" Hermione asked.

"It's a matter of my word Hermione." Harry said.

"Alright, but I'm coming with you." Hermione said.

Harry realized he wasn't going to win this fight so he just nodded his head. The two of them headed out of the portrait hole. Harry instinctively took his wand out of his pocket. He didn't know why he might need it out before the fight with Draco. Something just didn't feel right to him. It was a nagging feeling that scratched at the back of his mind.

"I've been meaning to ask you something." Hermione whispered.

"Oh yeah, what's that?" Harry asked as he turned his head towards Hermione.

"Your wand, it's also a staff right?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, but it's too cumbersome to be used as a staff all the time. It's a lot weaker in its wand form, but it's easier to use." Harry whispered as he turned his head forward.

"You also have a sword?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, but I keep that on a weapon rack in my room. I do keep my dagger on me at all times though."

"You have a dagger?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, it was a gift from the leader of the Goblins."

"The goblins gave you a gift?" Hermione asked. "I thought they hated all humans."

"I didn't know they hated us until I actually got to Hogwarts. I thought they were pretty nice people." Harry said. "Well, at least the ones I've talked to."

"That's unusual," Hermione stated.

"Quite," Harry said as he walked into the trophy room.

Harry let out a low whistle as he looked around the room. There were trophies of all shapes, sizes, types lining the walls. Harry read out a few of the plaques on the trophies. One of them caught his eye.

It was a trophy for a Gryffindor seeker from a few years back. The name on the plaque read 'James Potter'." He was about to tell Hermione about the trophy when he suddenly heard a noise.

"He sure took his sweet time." Harry said as he turned towards the noise.

He then saw the shadow of Miss Norris. When he did, he quickly ran over to Hermione and pulled her into the shadows. Hermione was about to say something but Harry slid his hand over her mouth. Harry pointed out Miss Norris, causing Hermione to settle down. Harry removed his hand over her mouth and started to look for an exit.

"What do we do?" Hermione whispered furiously.

"This way," Harry said as he noticed an exit behind a suit of armor.

The two children ran through the opening and into a hall. Miss Norris was quick to pick up their scent. Harry and Hermione bounded off towards the other end of the hall when they heard Miss Norris near the opening they came through. Torches lit as they ran passed them. Miss Norris wasn't far behind.

"Catch them my sweet." Filch, the caretaker, said as a lamp came into view.

Argus Filch was an odd fellow. He was always muttering to himself about the old ways of punishing students. He was constantly angry and upset about everything that a student did. He hated the Weasley Twins the most. They were always pulling stunts that Filch had to clean up. He was slightly balding and had a long hooked nose with a single wart on the end of it.

"How did Filch know we were there?" Harry asked.

"Malfoy must have tipped him off." Hermione said as they continued to run down the hall.

Corridor after corridor they ran. They didn't even stop when a staircase started to turn away from its landing. Miss Norris jumped up on the railing and jumped to the staircase after them. They were running down a hall when they suddenly reached a dead end. Harry

noticed cobwebs all over the walls. The corridor must not have been used in some time. He then saw Filch turn a corner with Miss Norris in front of him. He quickly turned towards a door at the end of the corridor.

"It's locked," Harry exclaimed as he pulled on the handle.

"Move aside for a second," Hermione said as she walked up to the door with her wand out. "Alohamora," Hermione muttered as a white light shot out of the keyhole. Suddenly the door swung open.

"Gods, I need to ask you to teach me some of these spells some time." Harry said as he pulled the door open and gently ushered Hermione inside. He then turned and locked the door behind them.

Harry pressed his ear up against the door. He heard Filch and Miss Norris run up to the door. Filch tried the handle but, when he realized it was locked, turned away in frustration. Harry heard him mutter something to his cat before he pulled away from the door. He turned towards Hermione to see her staring at something with her eyes wide from shock. He turned to where she was looking to see an enormous three-headed dog slowly waking up.

"Harry," Hermione stuttered. Harry could see her shaking out of the corner of his eye.

"Hermione, slowly move towards the door." Harry instructed.

"I can't, my legs aren't working." She hastily said.

Suddenly all three heads roared at the two preteens. They both screamed out in fear as they turned towards the door.

"Why in the world did I lock this thing?" Harry yelled as he pulled out the lock and pushed the door open.

Harry pushed Hermione out of the door just as a head bit down on the space she had been a second before. He then ducked and rolled out of the room as a second head bit down on the space above him. They both pushed as hard as they could to close the door. One of the heads pushed on the door against them but pulled back when it was pinched against the wall.

"What in the world is a thing like that doing in the school?" Harry yelled as he slid into a chair back in his common room. They were a lot more cautious on the return trip so as not to garner any unnecessary attention.

"Did you see what it was standing on?" Hermione asked as she sat down next to Harry.

"Yeah, I saw the trap door before I saw the dog." Harry said as he placed his head in his hands.

"What do you think it was guarding?"

"I have no idea." Harry said as he rubbed his face. "Maybe we should ask Hagrid about it next time we see him.

"Why ask Hagrid?" Hermione asked.

"He's got a thing for odd creatures." Harry said. "He told me about it last year when he visited the Leaky Cauldron. He might be able to shed some light on this situation."

"Gods I hope we don't get expelled for this." Hermione said.

"I'm sure we won't. I don't even think Filch saw our faces." Harry reassured his friend.

"I hope so," Hermione said as she leaned back against the couch. "We could have been killed."

Moreover, you're more worried about being expelled, Harry thought as he smiled inwardly.

Harry leaned back and looked at the ceiling, which had transformed into a view of the sky outside. Thousands of stars were twinkling above the two of them. A few stars shot across the moonlit sky. Harry smiled at the view above him. He then felt a weight on his shoulder. He turned to see that Hermione had fallen asleep and her head slid onto his shoulder. He turned slowly, picked Hermione up, and walked over to her room.

"She's got to be exhausted," Harry whispered as he placed her in her bed. He then stretched as he yawned, "I guess I'm pretty tired

too." Harry walked out of Hermione's room and into his own. He quickly changed into a pair of boxers and fell onto his bed. Once under the covers, he fell asleep. Two thoughts ran through Harry's head that night. I should not have trusted Malfoy to an honorable duel. The other, what could that three-headed dog be guarding?

A/N I've got a plan with Snape. This is why he'll seem nice to Harry one time and mean the next. Harry has a pretty heartfelt discussion with Hermione and Katie. He might go to Katie for some personal things in regards to his life more often than others. I don't know if I'll do this, but it could be used. Fluffy the Cerberus has been introduced and has nearly killed our hero, what fun. Anyways, thanks for reading. As always read and review. Tune in next time for another exciting episode of Harry Potter HSS. This is Kunaiswarm signing off. Ciao.

(A/N): Okay, I know it's been a really long time since I've last updated my story. A lot of things have been going on in my life that leave me little to no time to work on this story. Relax, I'm not going to give up on it just yet. If I do, you will all be the first to know. You're reviews over the time span between this chapter and last chapter have helped me keep this thing alive. I might not have a lot of time to write in the future, but I will try. With that, I'll leave you to reading.

Harry woke up slightly later than normal the next morning. He was stirred out of his sleep by a streak of light shining through the curtains of his room. He turned over with a slight groan, wondering why he woke up so late. He then remembered the crazy night he had last night. He sighed as he remembered the trap that Malfoy had laid for him. He pulled the covers closer after deciding that he would stay in bed a little bit longer today. He was almost asleep once more when something heavy landed on his bed. He shot up like a bullet and was about to hex the thing that disturbed him into oblivion when he realized what it was.

"Hermione, Merlin's beard you scared the life out of me." Harry said as he lowered his wand.

"I'm just paying you back for waking me up that other time." Hermione said, as she lay sprawled over Harry's bed.

"I didn't jump on your bed," Harry rubbed his eyes to try and wake up.

"I'm sorry Harry," Hermione said as she hoisted herself up into a sitting position at the edge of Harry's bed.

"I'm not mad Hermione. I was just a little preoccupied." He was about to throw the blanket off of him to get up and go shower when he remembered that he sleeps while wearing just a pair of boxers. "Um Hermione, do you mind leaving the room for a second?"

"Oh yes of course," Hermione said as she started to blush. "I'll meet you down in the common room?"

"I have a few things I need to do today. Gonna talk to Hagrid a bit." Harry said as he shook his head. "I'll meet up with everyone later today though."

"Okay, have a good day then." Hermione said with a smile.

Harry smiled back while he waited for Hermione to leave the room. Once the door closed behind Hermione, he threw the blanket off of him and headed for the shower. After a quick shower and a change of clothes, he used the toilet and headed out of his room. He saw that everyone else had already left the common room. He looked towards an oak grandfather clock near the fireplace to see that it was a little after eleven. He realized that he missed breakfast and would have to catch a meal in an hour when lunch started.

Harry exited the common room and started to head for the grounds. He decided that he would need to talk to Hagrid about the dog in the third floor corridor, something that big must need to be watched or at least fed. How in the world could someone get a dog that big into a school with children without being seen? Why would someone put a dog as vicious as that one in a school full of children?

Harry was so lost in thought that he didn't even realize he was a few feet from Hagrid's hut. He stopped suddenly when his train of thought ended. He looked around slightly confused before shaking his head to organize his thoughts. He walked up to the door and knocked on it a few times. He smiled when he heard Fang's loud barking. He was caught unaware when the large boarhound jumped on him from his left. He tried desperately to stop Fang from licking him to death.

"Fang stop, get off of me!" Harry yelled while laughing.

"Come on now Fang, get off the poor lad." Hagrid called out as he came into view.

Fang stopped licking Harry immediately. He turned his head towards Hagrid before bounding off to his master. Fang slumped down onto the ground with his head on his paws, eyes drooping. Harry propped himself up on his hands and stared towards the dog. He was amazed that the dog could be so energetic one minute and so lethargic the next. He accepted Hagrid's outstretched hand as he was pulled up to his feet.

"Sorry 'bout that Harry." Hagrid said as he tried to dust Harry off.

Harry's knees almost buckled under Hagrid's ministrations. "Thanks Hagrid," He then saw a small bag that Hagrid was carrying. "What do you have there?"

"Just some food for a few creatures of mine," Hagrid said as he patted the sack.

"Oh really, what kinds of creatures do you have?" Harry asked. He knew that the magical world held many fantastic and unknown creatures. He never had time to learn too much about any of them though.

"Mostly ones for class," Hagrid said as he motioned for Harry to walk with him.

"You run a class?" Harry asked as he walked alongside Hagrid over towards a large paddock.

"No, not me, Professor Grubbly runs a Care of Magical Creatures class." Hagrid said with a slight twinkle in his eyes. "She's a good person Harry, knows so much about different creatures."

Harry listened intently as Hagrid started to tell him about the different types of creatures at Hogwarts. Harry was especially interested in a type of winged horse called a thestral. "You can only see them if you've seen death. 'Tha's why so many people give them a bad rep. They think it's a curse if you can see em. Rubbish is what I say to tha'." Harry watched in awe as a jet-black horse with wings that looked like they would fit best on a bat walked up to the edge of the paddock.

"They're beautiful Hagrid," Harry said as he gently patted the horse's head.

"That they are Harry. That they are." Hagrid said as he started to feed the thestrals.

"Hey Hagrid, what other animals are in or around Hogwarts?" Harry asked as they started to head back towards Hagrid's hut.

"Oh all kinds Harry, if you look in the forbidden forest," Hagrid said with enthusiasm.

"Know anything about large dogs with three heads?" Harry asked off-handedly.

"Well, I've got Fluffy in the..." Hagrid suddenly caught himself. "You shouldn't know about him Harry."

"I was just wondering if a Cerberus was real Hagrid," Harry played it off with an air of innocence. "I read about them in a Greek mythology book and wanted to know if they were real."

"Oh, well good," Hagrid stuttered. "Although Fluffy is a real Cerberus we don't have one in the castle."

Harry smiled at Hagrid's innocence. "Thanks Hagrid, it was nice talking to you."

"You too Harry, go on and get some lunch, it's about that time."

Harry walked the distance to Hogwarts deep in thought once more. Hagrid knew about the three-headed dog in the third floor corridor. He even called the thing Fluffy as if it was a house pet. Harry liked the big guy but some of the things that Hagrid liked were downright dangerous. He made a mental note to make sure never to get on Hagrid's bad side. He was suddenly brought out of his musings when he entered the Great Hall. He first caught sight of Malfoy glaring at him.

"Hey Harry, how was Hagrid's?" Hermione asked when he sat down next to her.

"Very informative," Harry responded as he placed a chicken leg on his plate.

"Why did you go to Hagrid's Harry?" Susan asked.

"I needed to ask him about a certain creature I saw last night, after curfew." Harry said as he looked around. When he saw that no one was listening in on the conversation, he continued. "Hermione and I saw a large Cerberus after we escaped Filch." He whispered this to the group so no one would overhear them.

"Why were you out after curfew?" Daphne asked as she set down her fork.

"And what do you mean by a Cerberus?" Tracey was now listening intently. "I work with magical creatures at home. A Cerberus shouldn't be anywhere near this school, they're a class two creature."

"What do you mean by class two?" Harry asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Creatures are typically grouped into certain classes based on how dangerous they are." Tracey explained for the group. "Things like dragons, Cerberuses, and acromantulas are class two creatures. They are dangerous but normally can be avoided or taken down, given enough people."

"I'm almost afraid to ask what would be considered a class one creature." Harry said with an audible gulp.

"Dementors, sphinxes, lethifolds, creatures that kill easily with the slightest provocation, they are deemed class one creatures because they are nigh impossible to kill. Some of them are so strong that we have yet to find a way to kill it."

Harry's head was spinning. He had heard of some of those creatures while reading mythology books. Dragons, Cerberuses, sphinxes, all of these were well known mythical creatures. Dementors, lethifolds, and acromantulas were new to the boy. He had come face to face with a Cerberus, and was sure that he didn't want to face one without help. He wondered how much more powerful these class one creatures were.

"How far does the list go down?" Hermione asked hesitantly.

"Not too far actually. It goes from one to five." Tracey said quickly so ease the tension of the conversation. "Class five creatures are purely good creatures, they wouldn't hurt anyone. Class five creatures include unicorns, phoenixes, and ghosts."

"Wait, ghosts are considered a creature?" Harry asked as turned towards the girl.

"Unfortunately yes," Tracey said as she bowed her head low. "The ministry of magic deems anything that doesn't look like us as a creature."

"But ghosts look like us." Harry said defensively. "They were once humans."

"I know its cruel Harry, but that's how the majority of the purebloods think." Daphne said as she placed her hand on her friends shoulder.

Harry realized that he had basically yelled at his friend. "Tracey I'm sorry, I shouldn't have yelled at you. It's just that some things in this world are extremely backwards."

"I know Harry." Tracey said as she looked back towards Harry. "I'm a half-blood. My father doesn't like this world any more than you do."

Harry was suddenly bombarded with memories of his aunt and uncle trying to stamp any thought of magic out of him. He lowered his head apologetically.

"Don't get me wrong Harry," Tracey said hurriedly. She saw that her statement had brought up some painful memories. "My father loves me very much. He just hates a lot of the purebloods."

"How about we get away from this downward spiraling conversation?" Harry asked as he looked around. When he received a nod from everyone, he got back to the reason why he had gone to Hagrid's hut, "Now, about that Cerberus. Hagrid told me that he owns Fluffy but was a tad annoyed that I knew about him."

"Hold on, it's called Fluffy?" Hermione asked disbelievingly. "That thing has a name?"

"Apparently it does." Harry said with a smile. "Now I know that Hagrid has a thing for dangerous animals, but I don't think that Fluffy is as dangerous as we think."

Hermione suddenly placed her hand on Harry's forehead. "Harry, are you feeling okay? I just thought I heard you say that a giant Cerberus isn't dangerous."

Harry laughed before replied to Hermione's question. "I'm fine Hermione, but I didn't mean that he's completely harmless. I just don't think he's wild or anything." Harry looked around again to make sure that they were still quiet enough. "I think Hagrid trained it as a sort of guard dog. A German shepherd is a nice dog. However, if trained by the police, it can be a very ruthless animal. It's the same as if it were a wild dog."

"I can see how you think that Harry." Hermione said. "I just don't see it myself."

"Maybe I'm reading too far into things." Harry said with a shrug. "But with that trap door that it was standing on." Harry left the sentence hanging for the others to digest. Slowly everyone started to nod in agreement to Harry.

"Just don't ask me to stay in the same room with one." Neville said through a nervous chuckle.

"You and me both mate." Harry said as he returned to his meal. Though Harry desired to eat the rest of his meal, others had other thoughts.

"Mr. Potter, can you come with me please?" A voice asked from behind him.

Harry turned to see Professor Flitwick standing behind him. "Professor, what's wrong?" He then looked up to the house table to see Professor McGonagall looking at him with concern.

"The headmaster asked me to escort you to his office." Flitwick said as Harry slowly stood from his seat.

"Did he say why?" Harry asked as he glanced at the head table to find the headmaster was missing.

"He did not. However, he was most adamant that I escort you rather than your head of house." Flitwick said with a confused look on his face.

"Is that odd professor?" Harry asked as he turned back to the diminutive professor.

Professor Flitwick made a quick motion with his head to have Harry follow him out of the Great Hall. Harry then noticed that quite a few people had stopped their conversations to listen in on the two of them. Harry nodded his head and followed the professor out of the Great Hall. Once they were free of prying ears, Professor Flitwick slowed his pace to allow them time to talk while they headed towards the headmaster's office.

"Mr. Potter, I honestly have no idea why he had asked me to escort you rather than Professor McGonagall." Flitwick said to Harry. "While I have authority over the point system, I have none over what punishment you receive for any negative actions. I can authorize detentions, but it's up to your head of house to deem them acceptable."

"So he asked for me to come to his office because I am in trouble for something?" Harry inferred as he gave Professor Flitwick a knowing look.

"Now I didn't say that Mr. Potter." Flitwick said. However, a few seconds later he turned to Harry and nodded.

"With that knowledge in mind," Harry said as he sighed. "The headmaster is attempting to assert punishment on me by circumnavigating my head of house." Harry then had an idea. "Professor, you are a fair man, correct?"

"I would certainly hope I am a fair man." Professor Flitwick said as he gave Harry an inquisitive look.

"Would you care to sit in on the conversation that will be happening between the headmaster and me? I am also quite positive that there will be some sort of punishment for something that he will wish to dole out." Harry said as they neared the gargoyle guarding the headmaster's office.

"If you wish for me to assist you during the conversation, I can." Professor Flitwick said with a slight bow towards Harry.

"While that is one of the reasons why I wish for your assistance in the matter, as I do not know the entirety of the school's rules yet. The other reason is slightly more personal than that."

"Oh, what ever do you mean?" Flitwick paused and turned towards Harry.

Harry stopped slightly ahead of Flitwick and looked towards the floor. "I have a nagging feeling that the headmaster is not telling me something that I would very much like to know."

"Did you ask him something that he did not answer? Perhaps I can answer the question for you." Flitwick asked as he took on a concerned expression.

"No, it's nothing like that professor." Harry said as he waved the question and comment aside. "I have a nagging feeling at the back of my head that he knows something that relates to me personally. It's a little hard to explain." Harry said as he took a deep breath. He turned around and looked at the diminutive man in front of him. "I've read up on mind arts because of an incident that happened the other day. In the books I've read, there was a section on a spell used to erase a memory."

"You think that the headmaster used Obliviate on you?" Flitwick asked. Shock evident in his voice.

"It feels like he knows something extremely personal about me yet I don't know it myself. However, it's not like I once knew it and now I don't. It's just an odd feeling that someone knows something that concerns you that you don't know. The feeling is the same but, I don't know, it's just different as well." Harry sighed in exasperation. "Does that make sense?"

"Not entirely Mr. Potter." Flitwick said as he chuckled slightly. "Perhaps if you took a second to give me an analogy, it would better help me to understand."

Harry nodded before taking a few seconds to think. "Say you had a brother that you didn't know about because you were separated at birth. Now that brother grew up and lives in the same neighborhood as you. You don't know him as your brother but you've seen him around. Say someone found out that he was your brother but was pointedly keeping that information from you."

"Go on," Flitwick said when Harry paused to think a little more.

"Now say you've talked with this someone for awhile and they accidentally dropped a hint that he knows something about you that you don't. It doesn't even have to be a phrase or a word, it could be a look."

"I'm beginning to see what you mean Mr. Potter." Flitwick as he nodded.

"Good," Harry said as he breathed a sigh of relief, "I thought I wasn't making any sense there as well."

"That's quite alright Mr. Potter." Flitwick said with a chuckle. "I was in Ravenclaw during my years here for a reason."

Harry nodded before continuing. "Now the reason for my suspicions actually came to me awhile back before I came to Hogwarts. I was living with Tom, the barman of The Leaky Cauldron, for awhile for circumstances I do not wish to explain." Harry paused for Flitwick to allow him to continue without the explanation. "Thank you," Harry smiled as he continued. "The headmaster was gracious enough to pay me a visit during my stay with the Deadmans. He picked me out of the group of people staying there, even though I had a glamour charm on."

"The headmaster did always have a way of seeing through that which is concealed." Flitwick said.

"It's odd yes, but not pertinent to the story as much as I hope it isn't." Harry said as Flitwick nodded for him to continue. "He followed me into the kitchen of the bar in order to have a private conversation with me. We got into a slightly heated argument until he looked at my hand that holds my family rings." Harry held up his hand to emphasize his point. "As soon as he saw my rings I noticed something very subtle change with the headmaster. He looked, how should I put this," Harry screwed up his face in concentration. "At first I thought he was afraid. However, now that I think about it, it was more concerned and slightly angry. Then again, I'm not that good at reading faces."

"Why do you think that, Mr. Potter?" Flitwick asked. He was now intrigued himself as to what the headmaster could know.

"That's the question I would very much like answered professor." Harry said as he sighed.

"Well, we can always try to ask the headmaster if he knows something." Flitwick offered.

"It wouldn't hurt to try." Harry said as he turned back towards the gargoyles. "Do you want to let us in or do we have to attempt at a password?"

"Do you have a meeting with the headmaster?" One of the gargoyles asked. Its voice sounded as if rocks were grinding together to try and make the sound. When Harry thought about it more, it was probably exactly that.

"Mr. Potter was requested by the headmaster for a meeting earlier today." Professor Flitwick said as he stepped up in front of Harry. "Now as a professor of the school, I know that I do not need a password."

"Right, my apologies," The gargoyle said as it moved to the side. His brother just laughed as it moved in the same direction in front of the door. "Hey, this is not the time for jokes!"

"Sorry," The other gargoyle quickly moved away from the door.

As Harry and Professor Flitwick entered the small circular room, Harry distinctly heard the sound of stone striking stone. He smiled as he pictured the serious gargoyle pummeling the comical gargoyle for its childish act. Harry was slightly amazed when a circular stone staircase started to wind its way up the center column towards the room above them. He then remembered that he was in a school of magic and shifted his amazement aside for a more serious mindset. He would need to either act impassive or attempt to establish his dominance in the meeting. Harry took a moment to look around the sitting room before heading towards the door at the other end of the room. Before he knocked, he heard a voice from the other side of the door.

"Come in please." Dumbledore's voice sounded oddly clear even though he was behind a door.

Harry's eye twitched in annoyance as his hand went for the door. When he opened the door, he saw Dumbledore sitting in a high backed chair behind a desk. Professor Dumbledore's body language showed that he was in no mood for any of Harry's games. Harry's mouth twitched slightly as a smile threatened to cross it. That's a very gutsy move headmaster, to think that you hold all the power over me. You might hold enough to punish me as a student, but that's where the line is drawn.

"I beg to differ, Mr. Potter." Dumbledore said as he hands crossed to support his chin, the evening sun's light causing a glare to surface across his glasses.

Harry was slightly taken aback. He heard Professor Flitwick shuffle his feet slightly at Dumbledore's aura. Yes, it was definitely an aura. Normally that body position alone could cause a child to rethink themselves, but certainly not an adult. Harry wondered how long it took Headmaster Dumbledore to master that. If Dumbledore wants to play mind games, we can play. Oh and sense I know you're reading my mind right now I can say this without consequence. You had better cut the bullshit right now or I can just leave and come back when I feel like it.

"Mr. Potter, do not use such language with me." Dumbledore said. His voice was calm yet emitted a powerful authority.

"What ever do you mean headmaster. I do not recall saying anything until now." Harry said as he placed his hand over his heart and feigned being hurt. Harry decided to put his own power into play. He started to emit an aura of his own. It wasn't strong at all, but it was enough to bring Flitwick slightly back to reality.

"Headmaster Dumbledore, you wished to speak with Mr. Potter about an issue. I have brought him here as you requested." Flitwick said, his goblin blood demanding superiority.

"So you have, you may leave while I have words with Mr. Potter." Albus said as he gave Flitwick a look. This look clearly told the professor he was no longer needed, and should leave.

"I have asked him to stay as my proxy." Harry said as he shook his head. "Besides, you have already faulted yourself a number of times before this conversation could even start."

"May I ask as to what you are inferring towards?" Dumbledore asked.

"You have called me Mr. Potter more times than I would like, which is to say not at all." Harry said as he crossed the short distance between the door and the chair in a fluid movement. He sat deftly in the chair and held himself as if he were highly affronted with the man in front of him, which he was. "I do recall telling you that you could only call me Lord Potter until a time I deem otherwise."

"Very well Lord Potter, we can do this your way for the time being." Dumbledore sounded as if it strained him to call Harry by his title.

"Thank you headmaster that is all I really ask for." Harry said as he nodded. "Now, what is it that you wished to talk to me about?"

"A certain matter has been brought to my attention by a few individuals of a bout of rule breaking that you committed last night."

"Oh," Harry said as he raised his eyebrows in mock confusion. "I broke rules last night? Which were they if I may ask?"

"Out after curfew, evading a member of staff, evading punishment, illegal entry to places not allowed, illegal act of duel, just to name a few." Dumbledore said as a smile crept across his face. Now that I have the boy in a spot of trouble, he should come crawling to me to get him out of it. I must thank young Malfoy and young Weasley for their combined idiocy in asking Potter to a duel.

"May I ask what proof do you have for these allegations?" Harry asked with a casual wave of his hand.

"The three individuals have given me their word that they saw you last night." Professor Dumbledore said slyly.

"May I ask who these three teachers are?" Harry asked as he turned towards Flitwick whom shook his head.

"The identities of the parties do not need to be known for the accusations to be any less true." Dumbledore said with practiced finesse.

Damn, I was hoping to lure him into admitting if any of the sources were students. That leaves out Draco and Ron as two possible witnesses. Harry thought as he mentally slammed his fist down.

Such traps might have worked on another individual, but I have been alive for far too long to fall into a trap like that. Dumbledore thought as he smiled at Harry.

"Very well," Harry said as he readjusted himself in his chair to a more comfortable seating position. "We do not need to know the identities of the teachers who have laid these false accusations against me, though I sincerely thought that a teacher wouldn't do something like this towards a student."

"We most certainly would not do something as crass as to attempt to get a student in trouble." Flitwick said, as he stood up straighter. "Headmaster Dumbledore, I would actually like to know which of my friends has the gall to accuse young Mr. Potter of these claims."

Flitwick, next time I'm able to, I'm going to buy you a large gift. You are a genius. Harry thought as he smiled inwardly. He had Dumbledore by the hairs of his beard now.

Why wouldn't he just leave when he I told him to. Now he's helping the brat out of detention and possible suspension. Dumbledore thought as he was struck back by Flitwick's question.

"Perhaps another time Filius," Dumbledore said.

"Don't brush this off Albus. I wish to know if I should be cautious around any of the other staff members. I would not like to know that my friends are like this."

"Professor," Harry said quickly, he knew it had gone too far. "Professor Dumbledore is right. I was out after curfew for certain reasons."

"But you just claimed false accusations against you." Then Flitwick thought what Harry did. "You were attempting to see if the accusers were children. When Dumbledore said they were teachers, you bluffed with false claims of false accusations in order to see if he'd falter."

"Yes professor," Harry said as he tapped his nose.

"Care to elaborate on why you were out last night then?" Dumbledore asked.

"Protecting my honor," Harry stated as he folded his arms.

"So you were having a duel?" Filius asked. "Albus you should know that a formal duel supersedes any rules as long as it's not in a sensitive area."

"Mr. Malfoy and Mr. Weasley challenged me to a formal duel when they accused me of insulting their honor. I accepted but did not choose a second. I was well within my rights to accept the duel and carry it through. Mr. Malfoy and Mr. Weasley, apparently, do not care for such bonds of honor. They chickened out and sent Filch after me. I proceeded to retreat back to my common room." Harry felt another attempt at Legilimency but was lucky enough to block this one. He did not need the headmaster to know that he had seen Fluffy.

"That may be true for certain situations." Dumbledore sighed before continuing. "Hogwarts is supposed to represent a place of safety and learning. Surely a duel would be considered dangerous."

"Between two first years, you're joking right?" Harry asked incredulously. "Honestly headmaster, did you think we were going to use cutting curses and blasting hexes on each other? We only recently learned a stunning spell in Defense against the Dark Arts. I'll make sure to call you next time I stub my toe or get a paper cut. Heaven forbid I get a cramp as I'm walking to my next class." Harry was now standing with his fists clenched at his side. "How deadly do you think we are?"

"Mr. Potter, sit down please." Flitwick said as he walked up to Harry's side. "Your argument is valid but you are dangerously close to a spat of accidental magic."

Harry looked around suddenly and felt the air was thick with static energy. He saw a faint haze around everything, as if a heat wave decided to take residence in Dumbledore's office. He took a few deep breaths before calming down enough to sit back down.

"That is exactly my point. Accidental magic is dangerous and unpredictable." Dumbledore said as he smiled inwardly at Harry's loss of temper. "With that much magic you could have either produced a gentle breeze or gale force winds. You could have sent out a silencing charm or a flash flame hex." Dumbledore sighed as he realized this was going to get him nowhere fast. "However, Professor Flitwick is right, an honorable duel does excuse you for being out so late. A duel may be accepted regardless of time or place. However," Dumbledore stressed this word for a few seconds before he continued. "However, the next time a duel is brought up, please inform the staff beforehand."

Harry nodded ever so slightly, "I'll do that headmaster."

"That is all I ask for." Dumbledore said as he nodded. Under his breath, he muttered the word, "Brat."

"Is that all you wished to talk to me about?" Harry asked as he placed his hands on the arms of the chair.

"That is all, you may leave." Dumbledore said as he waved his hand towards the door.

Harry nodded as he got up to leave, he then noticed Fawkes on his perch. "Your phoenix doesn't look well headmaster."

"Ah, that is a tragedy," Dumbledore said as he turned towards Fawkes. "He is nearing his dying day. I hope it's not too far off." Dumbledore lied as he turned back to Harry.

That is not the look of a phoenix that is nearing its dying day, Hedwig lost all of her color and refused to talk to me when she reached her dying day. This is more of a look of utter sadness and emptiness. I shall need to talk to Hedwig after this. "That is a shame. He'll feel much better after the dying day passes. Hedwig was rather grumpy and sickly when it was her dying day."

"Right, you have a phoenix as well." Dumbledore said as he looked out the window. How could I have forgotten that the boy had a phoenix? I thought I had the last one left in the entire country. I must not have searched far enough.

As Harry was leaving, he noticed Fawkes give him a pointed look. Harry realized that the phoenix was trying to tell him something. He wondered why he didn't just communicate mentally with him.

"I'll send a friend of mine to talk to you later today my avian friend." Harry sent towards Fawkes. Fawkes dipped his head in thanks as Harry left the office. Why would a phoenix be that sad? They are normally the happiest creatures in the world, save for unicorns.

"Mr. Potter that was an interesting bluff you pulled off there." Flitwick said as they descended the winding staircase, "Even though the headmaster saw through it."

Harry sighed as he looked over to the charms professor. "Why is he so interested in my affairs? Professor McGonagall would have been more than capable enough to punish me for those things. In fact, she should have been the one to punish me. The headmaster should only dole out punishments if it is an endangerment towards the school or the student needs to be suspended or expelled."

"Headmaster Dumbledore likes to talk to the students every now and then. He likes to know the social aspects of the school. He wants to be able to talk to the students without them thinking that he's just an old man with a stick shoved up his..."

"Professor, you've taught charms for quite awhile, correct?" Harry asked quickly.

Professor Flitwick was suddenly stopped by Harry's outburst. He looked slightly embarrassed at the insult that he had almost given the headmaster as he responded, "What? Oh yes, I've taught charms for quite some time."

"I heard that my mother was very proficient at charms."

"Aye, that she was lad." Flitwick dipped his head somewhat at the memory of Harry's mother. "She was a brilliant woman."

"That's great," Harry said with a smile on his face.

This caught the charms professor off guard, "How is that great Mr. Potter?"

"Come to my common room tonight after dinner. There is someone I'd like you to meet." Harry waved goodbye before running off towards his common room. Professor looked on in stunned silence as he slowly waved back to Harry.

Harry smiled as he started to ascend the staircases to his common room. He started to slow down around the fourth floor when he suddenly remembered Fawkes. Something is definitely wrong there, and I'm going to find out what it is. Maybe Hedwig knows something that I don't. Regardless of the situation, that phoenix needs a friend to talk to. Besides, Hedwig needs something to do other than sleep all day.

"Right," Harry said to himself as he settled on situation at hand. He looked up and saw that he was nearing the seventh floor. Once inside, he was bombarded by his friends.

"What was that all about?" Neville asked Harry as soon as he stepped into the room.

"What did Dumbledore want?" Susan asked, interrupting Harry before he could answer Neville.

"Was it something bad?" Hermione asked as Harry started to answer Susan.

Harry held up his hand to silence his friends' questions. "Dumbledore was trying to punish me because of our midnight adventure." Harry said as he looked towards Hermione.

"How did he find out? No one saw us. Even though Filch's cat heard us, they never caught up to us." Hermione said quickly in Harry's defense.

"Relax Hermione. I lost the argument before it even started." Harry continued when Hermione looked confused. "He used Legilimency on me right when I entered the room."

"I don't care if he's the headmaster of this school, that's still illegal." Susan said as she folded her arms across her chest.

"It is?" Harry asked as all eyes turned to Susan.

"Yeah, you can only use Legilimency in a controlled environment with a specific written event to search for. There also has to be a proxy in the room for the person being read, in case something is found out that is personal to the person being read." Susan read off as if recalling it from a book. She blushed when everyone was still staring at her, "What?"

"That's brilliant. We can use that against the headmaster." Hermione said as she clapped her hands together.

"Unfortunately we can't." Harry said as he went to sit down on the nearby couch. Everyone returned to their seats before Harry started to continue. He tried to, but he was interrupted by a pair of voices.

"I heard something about ammunition against the headmaster." Fred said.

"What is it and why can't we use it against him?" George asked.

"C'mon guys it's probably something personal that they don't want to talk to us about." Katie said as the three of them exited Fred and George's lab room.

"Nah, it's nothing personal, just outright rude, and intrusive." Harry said as he tilted his head back to see an upside down view of Katie and the twins. "Besides, the more people that know about this, the less chance he has of hiding it."

"What did he do that's so horrible?" Katie asked as she and the twins took the empty seats around a large table.

"He called me into his office because of something that Hermione and I did last night."

"Oh, what did the two of you do?" Katie asked slyly as Fred and George chuckled.

"Good lord woman, we're only eleven years old. What do you think we would be doing?"

"Easy Harry, it was only a joke." Katie said as she held up her hands.

"Turnabout is fair play, as I was following through with the joke." Harry said as he folded his arms in victory. "You fell right into my trap."

Katie sighed after a few seconds when she realized that she had indeed fell into Harry's trap. "Alright fine you got me, now what where you saying about last night?"

"Well, they already know the story about last night." Harry said as he waved his hand across all of his first year friends. "I'll explain it again for you three."

"Our little Harrikins out past curfew," Fred said as he placed his hands together.

"They grow up so fast." George said as he wiped away an imaginary tear.

"Anyways," Harry said as he rolled his eyes. "I was going to the trophy room around midnight because Ron and Draco challenged me to a duel."

"Wait, what?" George said, all manner of comedy set aside.

"You're brother challenged me to a duel." Harry repeated.

Fred asked with astonishment lacing his words, "With Draco, as in Draco Malfoy, Slytherin's Draco Malfoy?"

"I know, that confused me too," Harry said as he nodded his head. "Anyways, Hermione decided that she wouldn't let me go alone." Harry nodded his head towards Hermione whom blushed a little bit. "When we got there, the room was completely empty, no one was there. We were about to leave when we heard Filch and his cat come into the room. Naturally, we did what any good student would do. We hightailed it out of there and ran away from the two of them. We ended up in the forbidden section of the third floor corridor."

"You did, what did you find?" Fred and George asked in unison.

"Something that should not be in this school at all," Hermione said.

"Yeah, definitely something dangerous, it coincides with the headmasters warning during the opening feast. We found a giant Cerberus guarding a trap door locked in a room that could be accessed with a simple unlocking charm."

"The headmaster has a Cerberus in the school?" Katie yelled as she stood up abruptly.

"Yeah, Dumbledore has Hagrid taking care of it for him." Harry said as he laughed. "Guess what the thing's name is."

"Knowing Hagrid he probably named it Fluffy or something." Katie mumbled as she sat back down.

"Got it in one," Harry said as he tapped his nose.

"Merlin, I was only kidding." Katie said. "Please tell me it's not a poodle or something?"

Harry shook his head. "No, I didn't get a good enough look at it to determine the breed." Katie rolled her eyes at Harry's sarcastic remark. He smiled at her as he continued, "We made it back here without anyone catching us, but somehow Dumbledore found out it was us. I'm assuming Draco and Ron told him about our planned nighttime stroll. He tried to get me in trouble for the duel as well, even though Flitwick said that I was completely within my right to defend my honor. Why is that?" Harry asked the last as he looked around the room.

"A member of high ranking can accept a duel any time and any place as long as it is with a person of equal power, that's if you call the duel. If anyone else calls the duel then you can fight anyone, as long as that person is stupid enough to fight you. You can also decline a duel if you wish." Susan said.

"How do you know all of this stuff?" Harry asked before something dawned on him. "Wait, your last name is Bones right?"

"Yeah," Susan said as she nodded her head. "My full name is Susan Mary Bones."

"Any relation to Amelia Bones?" Harry asked.

"She's my aunt." Susan said.

A wicked smile spread across Harry's face as he got an evil idea. "How fast can you get your aunt here?"

"If your fireplace is connected to the floo network, then I can get her here in a couple of minutes, as long as she's not busy." Susan said as she turned to the fireplace.

"I don't know if it is actually." Harry said as he turned towards the portrait of Godric Gryffindor.

"The fireplace is what you want it to be Harry." Godric said with a nod.

"So if I want it to be connected to the floo network, then it'll be connected?" Harry asked himself. He turned back to the fireplace and noticed a small pot appear out of nowhere. He got up and walked over to the pot to see that it was filled with a green powder. "Well it's got floo powder now, so I assume it's connected."

"Alright, just give me a second and I'll call my aunt." Susan said as she jumped out of her seat and hastily walked over to Harry's side. She took a pinch of powder and threw it into the fire after stating in a clear voice, "Ministry of Magic, Department of Magical Law Enforcement, Amelia Bones' office."

The fire flashed green before it settled back down. Susan stuck her head into the fire. Hermione went to pull her out before everyone stopped her. She was very confused about the act so Harry went back over to her and sat down.

"Harry, why isn't the fire burning her?" Hermione asked.

"Floo fires allow for near instantaneous travel in the wizarding world. They also allow you to communicate with other fireplaces by sticking your head into the fireplace after mentioning the place you want to contact." Harry said as he placated Hermione with his explanation, "Although, it's very dizzying and disorientating." Harry chuckled at Hermione's look of awe.

"So brooms are just one way of travel?" She asked. Nothing in her schoolbooks, even the extra ones she picked up, mentioned the different forms of travel.

"There are four magical forms of transportation. Floo, Flying, Aparation, and Portkeys," Harry said as he counted them off on his fingers. "All except flying are uncomfortable.

"How are they uncomfortable?" Hermione asked, eager to learn.

"Floo transportation forces you to spin around as you travel to the destination. Either that or everything else is spinning around you. Aparating makes you feel like you are being squeezed through a much too small tube, and portkeys force an unpleasant pulling sensation on your naval, best to do so on an empty stomach."

"I ported somewhere after lunch one time," Daphne said with a slight green tinge to her face. "I never wanted to see food again, at least until I recovered from the intense nausea."

"Why doesn't anyone invent a form of travel that isn't sickening?" Hermione asked.

"They did," Harry said. Hermione turned her head towards him with a puzzled look. "It's called flying."

"What about people like me who don't like heights?" Hermione asked.

Harry opened his mouth to answer but closed it soon afterwards. He shook his head in thought before he answered Hermione. "You know, I actually have no idea why anyone wouldn't do that. Then again, I've only been in the wizarding world for about a year. It'll be two this boxing day."

"Where were you before then?" George asked.

"George shh," Katie said quickly as she shook her head.

"How'd you know he was George?" Fred asked. "What if I was George?"

"Ah, but you weren't George now were you?" Katie said as she looked towards Fred. "Besides, a woman has her ways." The females of the group slowly nodded their heads while the males looked at each other in confusion.

"I'll tell you the story later guys." Harry said with a sad smile. "It's not something to read around the fireplace."

"No pressure mate." Fred said as he silenced his brother who was about to speak in protest.

"The twins not on the same wavelength?" Katie asked in shock. "That's a first."

"Hey, it happens." George said with a slight blush.

"She said she'll be over in a second, but wanted to know the address." Susan said as she pulled her head out of the fire.

"Just tell her to call out Godric's common room," Said Godric from his portrait.

"Okay," Susan said before sticking her head back into the fireplace.

A few minutes later, a woman who looked like an older version of Susan stepped out of the fire. She was very tall and had her hair up in a tight bun, similar to the way Minerva McGonagall wore her hair. She had a gold-ringed monocle over one of her eyes with a long golden chain connecting to her shirt collar. She was wearing light green robes with an elegant black floral pattern adorning the center of the back of the cloak.

"She looks just like you," Hermione said before she could stop herself. "I thought you said she was your aunt."

"She is," Susan said sadly.

"Her mother was my twin sister." Amelia said as she placed her hand on Susan's shoulder. Susan looked up at her aunt and smiled at her. "Now Susan, what's with the location? I thought you told me you were sorted into Hufflepuff like me. Why are we in the Gryffindor common room?"

"This isn't the Gryffindor common room ma'am." Harry said as he got up and walked over to Amelia. "This is my common room."

"You have your own common room? Were you not sorted into a house?" Amelia asked.

"Oh no, I was sorted into Gryffindor." Harry said with a wave of his hand. "I'm in my own common room because of a certain headmaster that deemed it necessary to have an unhealthy relationship with me. I don't want to wake up one night with him standing over my bed." Harry shuddered as he thought of the image.

"Headmaster Dumbledore is a respected man," Amelia said stiffly. "He wouldn't do anything terrible to a child."

Harry closed his eyes as he remembered the reason why he was with the Dursleys. He clenched his fist as he remembered the beatings he had earned from the three of them. His fists started to shake with uncontrollable rage, not towards Amelia, but towards the headmaster of the school. Why does everyone think that he's some sort of prophet of the light. No one is purely good nor is anyone purely evil. Everyone does things for reasons that they think are right and good. Harry took a deep breath before he unclenched his fists and opened his eyes.

"I'm sorry ma'am, but I have to disagree with you on that last statement." Harry said.

"Harry, even if you don't think it, he is a respected man." Amelia repeated.

"I wasn't talking about that. I don't doubt that people worship the ground he walks on." Harry said as he shook his head. "I was disagreeing about the part where he would never harm children."

Amelia raised an eyebrow at the comment. Clearly the boy had a story to tell, otherwise he wouldn't drag Dumbledore's name through the dirt so carelessly. Her years of training were able to tell her as much. She developed a sixth sense about withholding information. She could tell by body language or sentence structure if the person was lying or not telling the whole truth.

"Care to elaborate on that?" Amelia asked.

"Not exactly," Harry said as he sighed. "It's been a trying few days, and I'd rather not relive some painful memories." Harry looked directly into Amelia's eyes as if trying to tell her to drop the matter.

"Very well," Amelia nodded. "But do not think that I will drop the matter. If something illegal has been done, then I need to know." She then softened her gaze before continuing. "The memories may be painful, but I doubt you wish to live with them all your life."

Harry looked towards Hermione and Katie before he nodded. "You're right ma'am."

"Now, I don't believe you asked me here for that reason." Amelia said.

"Oh, right," Harry nodded his head quickly before turning back towards Amelia. "What are the specific rules for starting a sanctioned duel?"

Amelia looked from Harry towards her niece then back again. "Why do you wish to know about that?"

Harry grinned evilly, "A certain duo has skived off on a legal duel."

"Did you start the duel or did they?" Amelia asked, the full weight of her authority behind her every word.

"They did ma'am." Harry said as he shook his head. "They challenged me to the duel yesterday. When I showed up at the designated spot during the designated time, they were not there. They also sent Mr. Filch after me in order to get me into trouble for being out after curfew."

"Nonsense, school rules do not apply to dueling etiquette." Amelia said as she waved off the last sentence. "Who were the cowards?"

"Draco Malfoy and Ronald Weasley ma'am." Harry said.

"I imagine that they are students here, judging by the last names." Amelia asked. Harry confirmed her unasked question with a nod. "What did you wish to do?"

"Has the duel technically started since one of us was at the right place at the right time?"

"Unfortunately it doesn't work that way." Amelia said as she shook her head. "Too many people used that loophole in order to ambush their targets at a later time and place. We had to get rid of that technicality."

"Can I ask for another duel?"

"I don't see why not."

Harry then suddenly heard the bell announcing dinner. "Is it that late already?"

"You were with the headmaster for a few hours. Besides we've been here for a couple hours anyways." Neville said as Harry turned towards the grandfather clock next to the fireplace.

"Care to join me in the Great Hall Madam Bones?" Harry asked as he held out his arm.

"I sense a show that I do not want to miss." Amelia said as she took Harry's arm and walked out of the common room, the rest of the gang following behind.

Along the way to the Great Hall, Harry asked Amelia more about duels and their rules. By the time they reached the hall, Harry was well versed in the basics towards dueling. When the group entered the Great Hall, a few voices died down at the notice of the head of the DMLE entering the room. The stares got other's attentions and soon the entire Great Hall was quiet, save for the few stragglers still coming into the hall. The headmaster immediately rose from his chair and walked the length of the hall towards the group.

"Madam Bones, may I ask what you are doing here?" Dumbledore asked as he looked towards the other members of the group. His eyes fell on Harry and his headache started to rise. Why does the boy insist on following his own rules?

"An interesting matter has been brought to my attention." Amelia said as she let go of Harry's arm and resumed her businesslike posture.

"If you follow me to my office, we can discuss the matter in detail there." Dumbledore said as he extended his hand towards the door.

"Actually, we can settle the matter right here, right now." Amelia looked out towards the student body and saw that they were all staring. "If you please, can all the students belonging to the center two tables, stand up and walk towards either the staff table or here?"

A few seconds later, after the Hufflepuffs and Ravenclaws vacated the center of the hall, Amelia took out her wand and joined to two table together. After the two tables were conjoined, she waved her wand once more causing the food to disappear. She placed her wand back into her holster and stared at Headmaster Dumbledore. She nearly smiled when she saw his angry face.

"Madam Bones, I ask that you do not rearrange my school without asking me first." Dumbledore said scathingly.

"Oh don't worry headmaster, this is only temporary." Harry said as he walked over to the table.

Everyone's eyes were now solely on Harry as he climbed onto the table. As he stood up, he looked around towards the rest of the students. He then spotted Draco, hiding behind Crabbe and Goyle. He smirked at the cowards attempt to hide. He looked towards Gryffindor table to see Ron with a chicken leg in one hand and a biscuit in the other. He was surprised to see that Ron had yet to notice what was going on around him.

"What is going on here Lord Potter?" Dumbledore asked as he turned towards Harry.

"Isn't it obvious my dear headmaster?" Harry said as he extended his arms out towards the students. "I'm going to challenge a certain duo to a duel. Malfoy, Weasley, front and center!" Harry frowned when no one moved. He saw a few of the Weasleys looking towards him questioningly. "I'm sorry, I should have specified." Harry then raised his voice another couple of octaves. "Draco Malfoy, Ronald Weasley, get your arses on this table right now!"

Harry sighed when he still saw no movement. He looked over towards his friends whom immediately nodded. They knew what

Harry had wanted them to do. Blaise, Tracy, and Daphne walked over to the Slytherin table and grabbed Draco. Fred and George walked over to the Gryffindor table and grabbed Ron. Together, they all pulled Harry's victims towards the dueling stage.

"Get your hands off of me." Draco yelled. "When my father hears about this, you'll be sorry."

"Hey, I wasn't finished eating." Ron complained. "What's going on?"

When Draco and Ron were placed on the platform, Harry smiled viciously. "Please tell me you didn't already forget the duel that you both skipped out on yesterday." Harry said, his voice carried out all across the hall.

"We didn't challenge you to a duel." Draco said quickly.

"Yeah, we didn't challenge you to a duel." Ron mimicked.

"Draco, when did you get a parrot?" Harry asked. "You've trained him so well."

"Hey, I'm not a parrot." Ron said scathingly. He then turned to Draco, "What's a parrot?"

Three quarters of the hall burst out into laughter. The rest were eyeing the confrontation with interest. A Hufflepuff with spiky pink hair spoke up above the crowd of laughter.

"Did they really refuse a duel with a lord?" The Hufflepuff asked.

Harry turned his head towards the voice before he picked her out of the crowd. "They challenged me to a duel yesterday." Harry nodded. "They were quiet enough so that only a few people could overhear. However, all of the portraits knew about it." Harry then laughed. "It's a good thing they did know about it because I nearly forgot until Godric reminded me of it."

"Isn't it illegal to refuse a duel with a lord?" The pink haired Hufflepuff asked.

"Not really," Amelia asked. "But he is within his right to demand a duel for their cowardice."

"Which is what I'm doing right now." Harry said as he turned back to Draco and Ron. "I challenge you victims ... I mean you two to a duel. Right here right now, first year spells only. You can only use what you have on you."

Draco knew when he was in a situation that he couldn't get out of. He looked around and saw everyone whispering and pointing towards them. "Fine, I accept."

"I accept as well. Who's your second?" Ron said nervously.

"As I said before, I don't need a second." Harry said confidently.

"I'll be your second." The Hufflepuff said as she started to walk towards the platform. A few feet before she got there she tripped over herself. Harry jumped down and caught her before she hit the edge of the platform. "Sorry, I'm really clumsy."

"Nah, there's actually a raised stone tile over there." Harry said as he pointed. Sure enough, there was a slightly discolored stone tile sticking up an inch from the floor.

"Thanks nonetheless," The Hufflepuff said. "My name's Tonks. Nice to meetcha Harry."

"Just Tonks, do you have a first or last name?" Harry asked.

"I have a first name, but I'll kill you if you call me by that." Tonks said with a smile.

"Tonks it is then." Harry said quickly as she climbed back onto the stage.

"That's not fair," Ron shouted. "You've got a seventh year helping you."

"First year spells only then?" Harry asked as he shrugged his shoulders.

"We haven't learned that many spells yet." Draco said quickly.

"Fine then," Harry said roughly. "Stupefy and Protego only." Harry stared daggers at the two, "Happy?"

They both nodded before they drew their wands. Harry and Tonks drew their wands as well. Amelia cast a large shield charm around the table to prevent stray spells. Harry leaned over to Tonks and whispered something to her.

"Hey Tonks, fancy for some scare tactics?" Harry asked while they were whispering.

"What do you have in mind?" Tonks asked.

Harry started to whisper his plan to Tonks. She was loving every bit of it. When Harry said the last bit of the plan, Tonks smiled and nodded her head.

She smiled and nodded her head before she resumed her stance. Dumbledore started the countdown from five. When he reached one, Harry and Tonks both sheathed their wands. Draco and Ron looked confused and dipped their wands a little bit. Harry and Tonks used this to their advantage. As soon as Dumbledore said one, Harry and Tonks sheathed their wands and screamed a loud battle cry. Ron and Draco stumbled backwards slightly in shock. During the confusion, Harry and Tonks rushed forward towards the two. They closed the distance in seconds and had them pinned down against the table before anyone realized what was going on. Harry and Tonks quickly disarmed the two of them and tossed their wands aside. Disarmed and restrained, Draco and Ron were forced to admit defeat.

"Well that was surprisingly easy." Harry said as he got up off of Ron.

"Well they are first years." Tonks said as Harry helped her to her feet.

"You cheated," Draco mumbled as he got off the platform.

"What was that Malfoy? I didn't quite hear you." Harry said as he turned towards Draco.

"You cheated," Draco said, loud enough for the entire hall to hear.

Harry laughed at him and shook his head. "Please tell me how I cheated. I stuck to the rules."

"You used muggle methods," Ron said.

"The rules didn't say that I couldn't." Harry said with another shake of his head. "The rules stated that we could only use Stupefy, Protego, and that which was on us."

"I think our bodies count as something that's on us." Tonks said.

"That's still cheating." Draco repeated.

"Never let your enemy battle you on an even playing field." Harry said as he turned to the rest of the school. "If you can find something that gives your opponent a disadvantage, use it. Do not hesitate to tip the balance in your favor, even if that means screaming at the top of your lungs and running at the enemy like a wild animal."

"That is one of the first rules we teach our aurors." Amelia said as she walked up to the couple.

Harry nodded his head as he continued. "You had five to seven seconds to stun us. We were unarmed, and it only takes two seconds to aim your wand and shout the word. You could have had each of us three times over."

"We didn't expect you to yell at us like you were going to kill us." Ron said dejectedly.

"That's the whole point." Harry said loudly as he threw his hands up into the air. "You didn't expect it. Therefore, it was our best option. I could've pretended to pass out and you would have fallen for it. Then Tonks would have been open to stun the both of you."

"That's still cheating." Ron said.

"God, the only thing you two ever do is repeat each other." Harry said as he turned on his heel and walked out of the hall.

"Harry, wait up!" Tonks yelled as she dashed off after him.

"Do you think we should go after him?" Hermione asked as she watched Harry disappear around a corner.

"He'll be fine." Hannah said as she walked up next to Hermione. "He just needs to cool off."

"Who was that girl anyways?" Neville asked.

"Tonks is a seventh year Hufflepuff. She's really nice, always helping the first years." Susan said. "Other than that, I don't know."

"Harry, wait up." Tonks said as she jogged to catch up to Harry.

Harry stopped, turned, and waited for Tonks to catch up to him. When she did, she pointed towards an unused classroom so that they could talk. Harry nodded his head and walked into the classroom behind Tonks. He took a seat at one of the desks while Tonks sat on top of the desk itself.

"Is it me, or is the entire pureblood wizarding populace a bunch of morons?" Harry asked as he rubbed his face in exasperation. He then realized what he asked. "Oh crap, are you a pureblood?"

"Nah, not me." Tonks said as she swung her legs back and forth. Harry sighed in relief. "But my mum is."

Harry groaned, "I never say anything right."

"Relax Harry, she hates purebloods too." Tonks as she placed her hand on Harry's head.

"Why does everything always happen to me?" Harry said, resting his head on the surface of the desk.

"I think it's because you're famous." Tonks said.

"Nah, you think?" Harry asked sarcastically.

"Maybe they just don't like you." Tonks offered.

"You wound me Tonks." Harry said as he sat up and leaned back in the chair.

"Just stop thinking about it too much, eventually it will go away."
Tonks said as she hopped off the desk.

"Hey, can I ask you something?" Harry said as he stood up. Tonks nodded, "Why did you decide to be my second?"

"You're interesting," Tonks said after a few seconds.

"That's it?" Harry asked.

"Yep," Tonks said as she nodded. "Can I ask you something?"

"Sure, go ahead." Harry said as he shrugged.

"Wanna be friends?" Tonks asked eagerly as she leaned against the desk.

Harry busted out laughing. Tonks looked on angrily at Harry before he held up his hand. "Sorry, sorry," Harry said as he tried to calm down. "Sure, why not." Harry held out his hand, which Tonks shook.

(A/N): Interesting stuff eh? Harry meets Tonks, Draco and Ron get their collective rear ends handed to them in an unconventional duel. Harry is getting more and more pissed off with wizarding society. Now on to the real stuff. I am still writing this. It is a slow going process but I do get a little out every once in a while. My schedule is very hectic and I tire easily, which leaves me with little time to write. However, the show must go on. Until next time, this is Kunaiswarm signing off. Ciao.

Chp17